

NO. 3

NOV., 1987

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WHY RENT WHEN
YOU CAN OWN

MORPHS



MORPHS

No. 3 NOVEMBER, 1987

FRONT COVER: DONNA BARR
BACK COVER: JOHN SPEIDEL

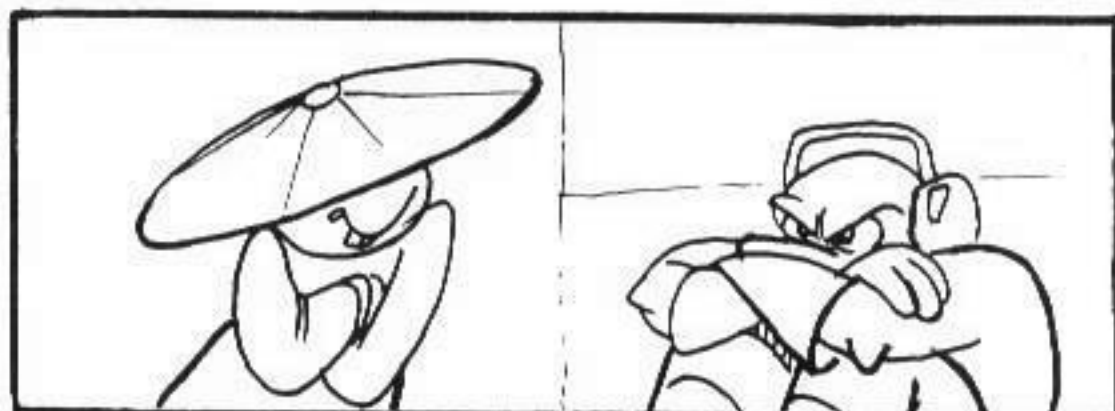
BOSOM ENEMIES

BY DONNA BARR



STAR LIZARD

BY TOM OWENS



PUNK MUTANTS ON CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES VS, DALMATION ALLEY

BY PHIL MORRISEY



J.L. COON IN PLEASURE PALACE PART II

BY TOM LINEHAN



BOTSWANA BISON IN OLD WOUNDS REMEMBER

BY DARIN DAVIS



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DONNA BARR ©87 done it.

Bosom Enemies

OR: What became of Stu and Stephan.

Sgt. Stewart Harrow isn't feeling very patriotic right now. He's feeling tired and stupid and secretly a little relieved. He didn't **WANT** to be captured, but it beats being shot. And to his comfort he's found that his captor, Lieutenant Stephan Egger, has enough English to be coaxed into a safer frame of mind...

Uh—look, Fritz, you don't mind me askin', do ya? But are we lost?

Nee.

I guess the compass is just for entertainment, then.

Why YOU so worried? You a priz'ner. You don't gots to tink no more.

Well, I **WAS** thinkin', Hans—

If your side saw **ME**, or my side saw **YOU**, we might both get kinda ventilated before **ANYBODY** stopped t' think.

Hm.

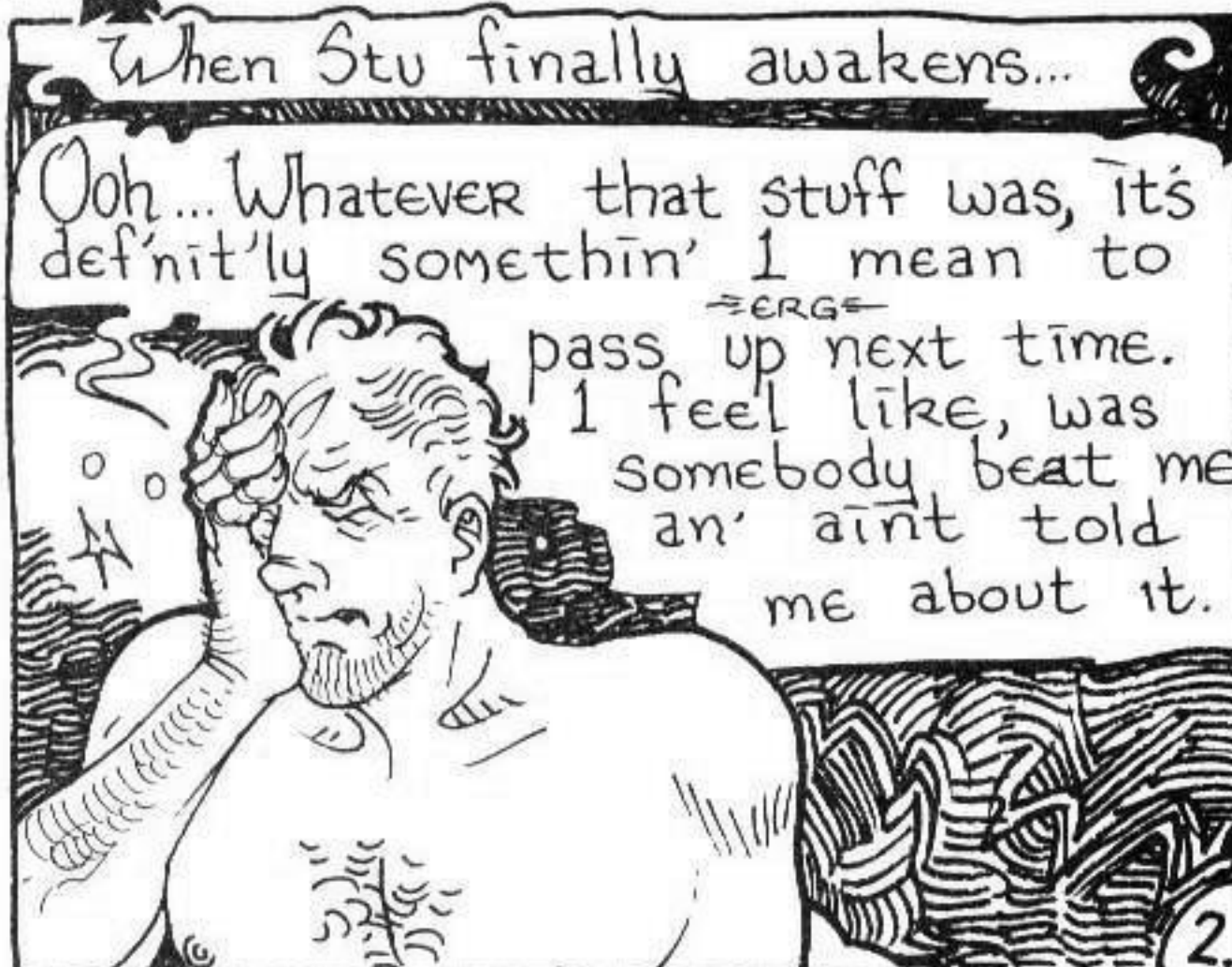
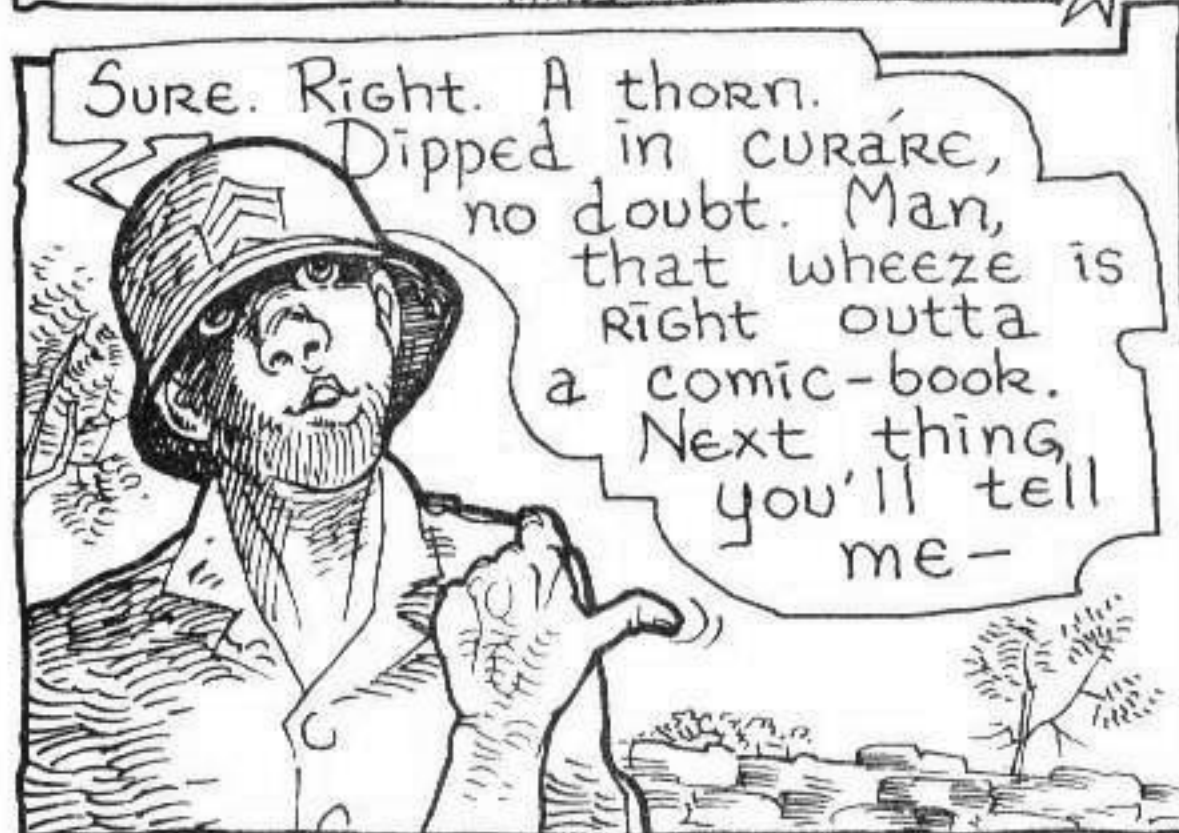
I mean right by us both, Adolf.

Um Gotteswillen! My name is **NOT** "Fritz" or "Hans" or "Adolf!" It's Stephan! Well, I ain't figgered you'd tell me if I just **ASKED** you. **YOU** can call me "Stu."

How **SCHMART** you tink it ist, to teasing somevon what gots you priz'ner, **NASEWEIS!?**

Who's teasin'? I figger if we get on a first-name footin', there'll be less chance **SOMEBODY** starts flingin' hot lead around.

Eight million American solchers, und I hafe to capture a psychoanalyst!



Dark in here, wherever it is.
And somebody's snatched all my
clothes; **HOPEFULLY** to replace
'em with some-
thin' better.
Or at least cleaner.
I'll say this;
whatever I'm
lyin' on is
nice an'
soft.



Spitter! It soft because you
lyin' on **ME!** Pliz to take de
elpow me out de
schmall off de
BACK!



Huh? My
kraut!

I am not
"YOUR"
anyting!

Now
get
off me
de **BACK!**

Oop.



Um—
Stephan, I
wouldn't
get up,
yet.

VHAT!?

That
stuff's
done
somethin'
bad; it's
either to
YOUR body,
OR **MY** brain.

Vill you
let me
get up
und
LOOK!?

It's
YOUR
funeral.



It seems it's **EVERYBODY'S**
funeral...

Mein Gott! Nur **SIEH!!**

Jesus Gawd!
Is this
what they
mean by
"a horse's
ass!?"



Hey, we can't walk like this; we ain't made for it. My back's killin' me already!

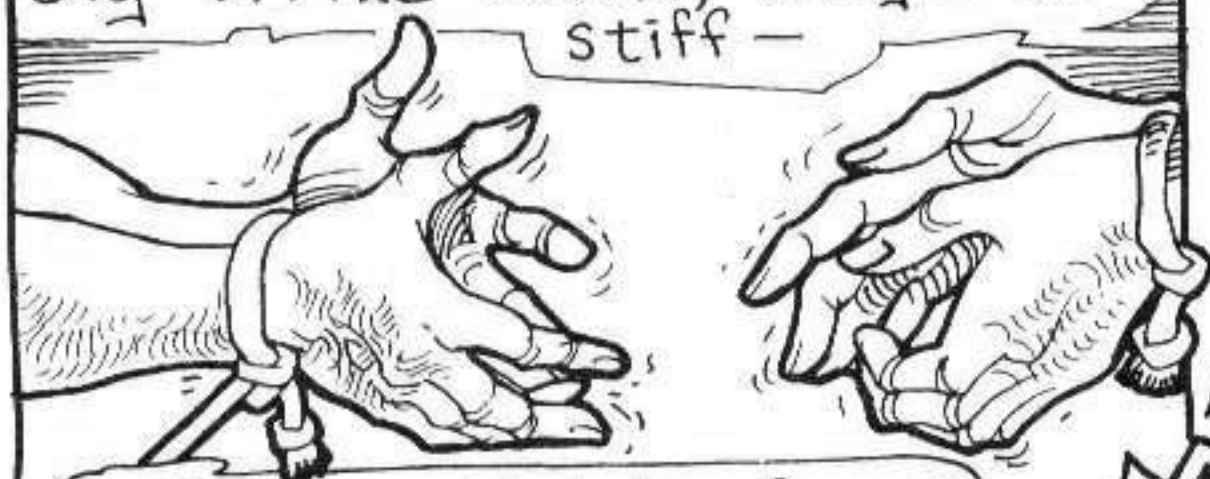
Dat bad. But ve tie up, und dat VORSE.

How's that WORSE!?



De Händer don't VORK!

Jeez! Neither do mine! I can bend the fingers, mostly, but I don't think I can use 'em for any LITTLE work; they're all stiff —



— Und numb! Like foots!

-WHO!!

Tck! Tck!



What in Godawmighty IS it!?

* It's a Tudan, but that's for you to know, and Stu to find out.

It MEAN ve a bad sort priz'ner. Property-sort. Und - UH-OH.

Whot!? Damnit, Steph, you got a way of scarin' a guy half to death!



SOMEBODY means to have us on all fours for SERIOUS!

1gitte! Und 1 tink 1 chust finds out-

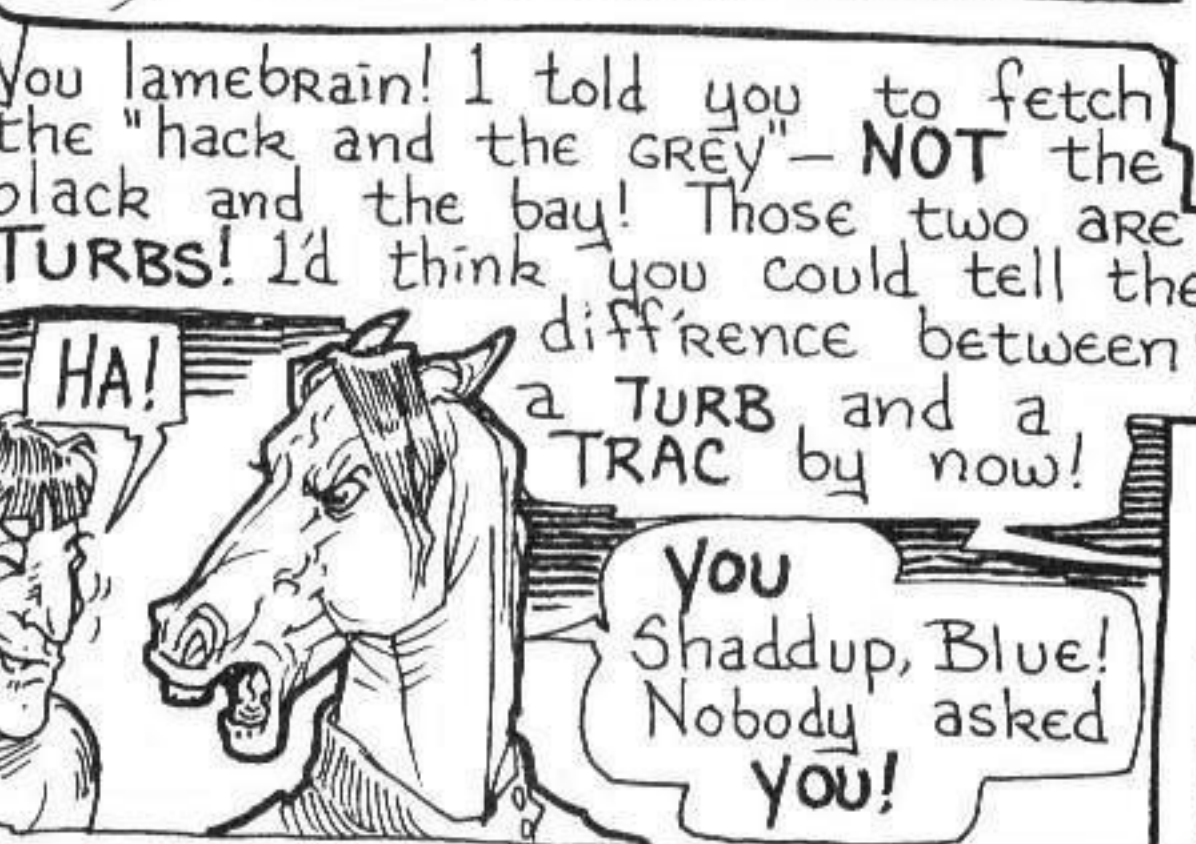
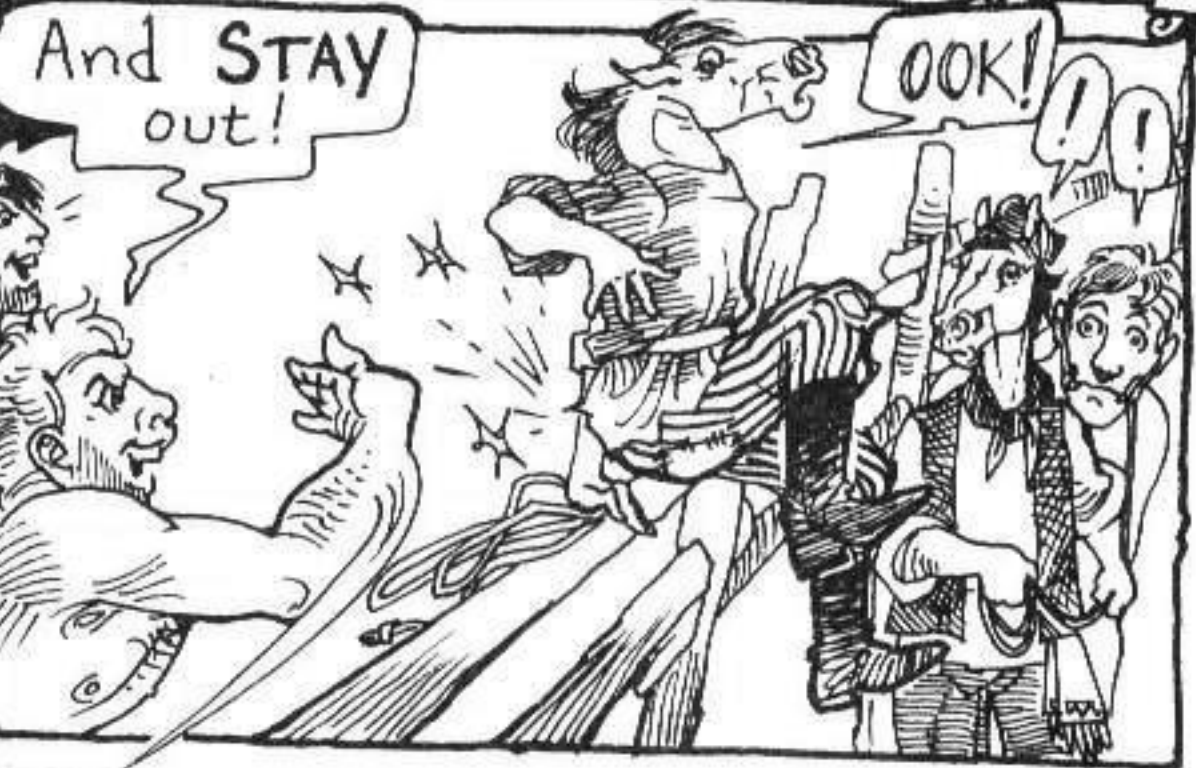


See it hide de rope? I TELLED you ve bad sort priz'ner!

I don't like the way it's cluckin' and whistlin'. I'm from Arizona — which is horse-country, Steph — and it's bein' too damn' familiar!

I Zityboy, vhat don't know horse so goot — but I know I not like DOT!



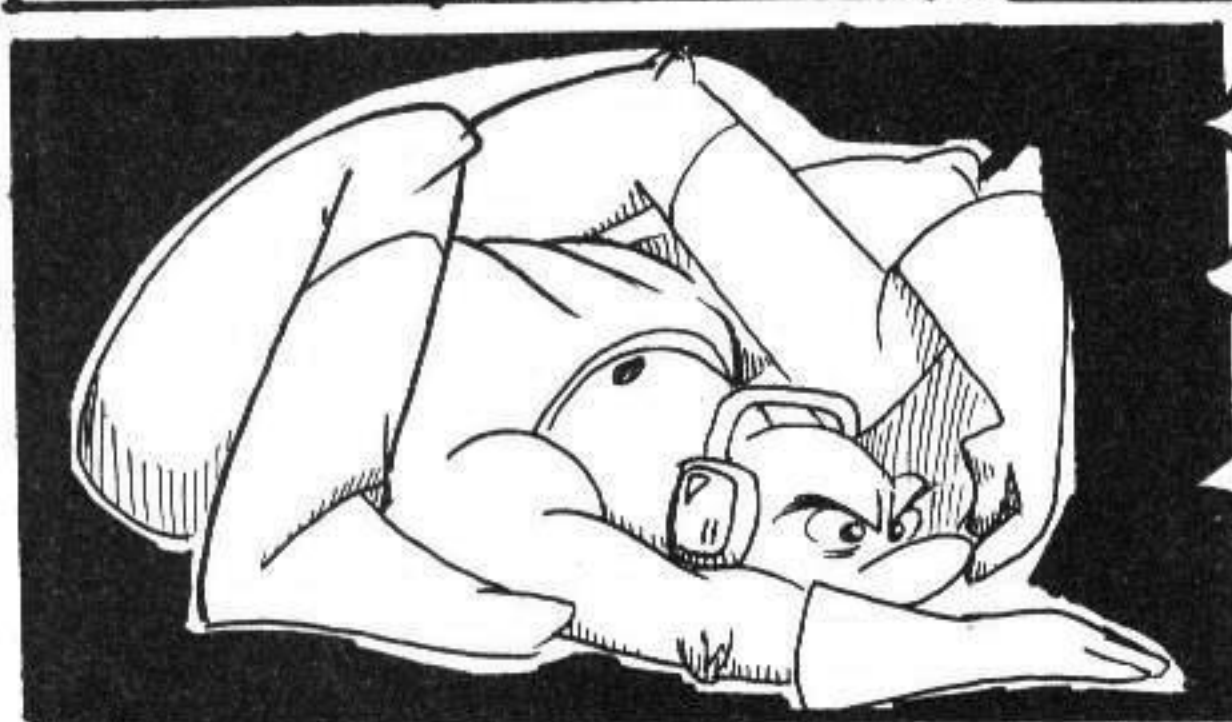
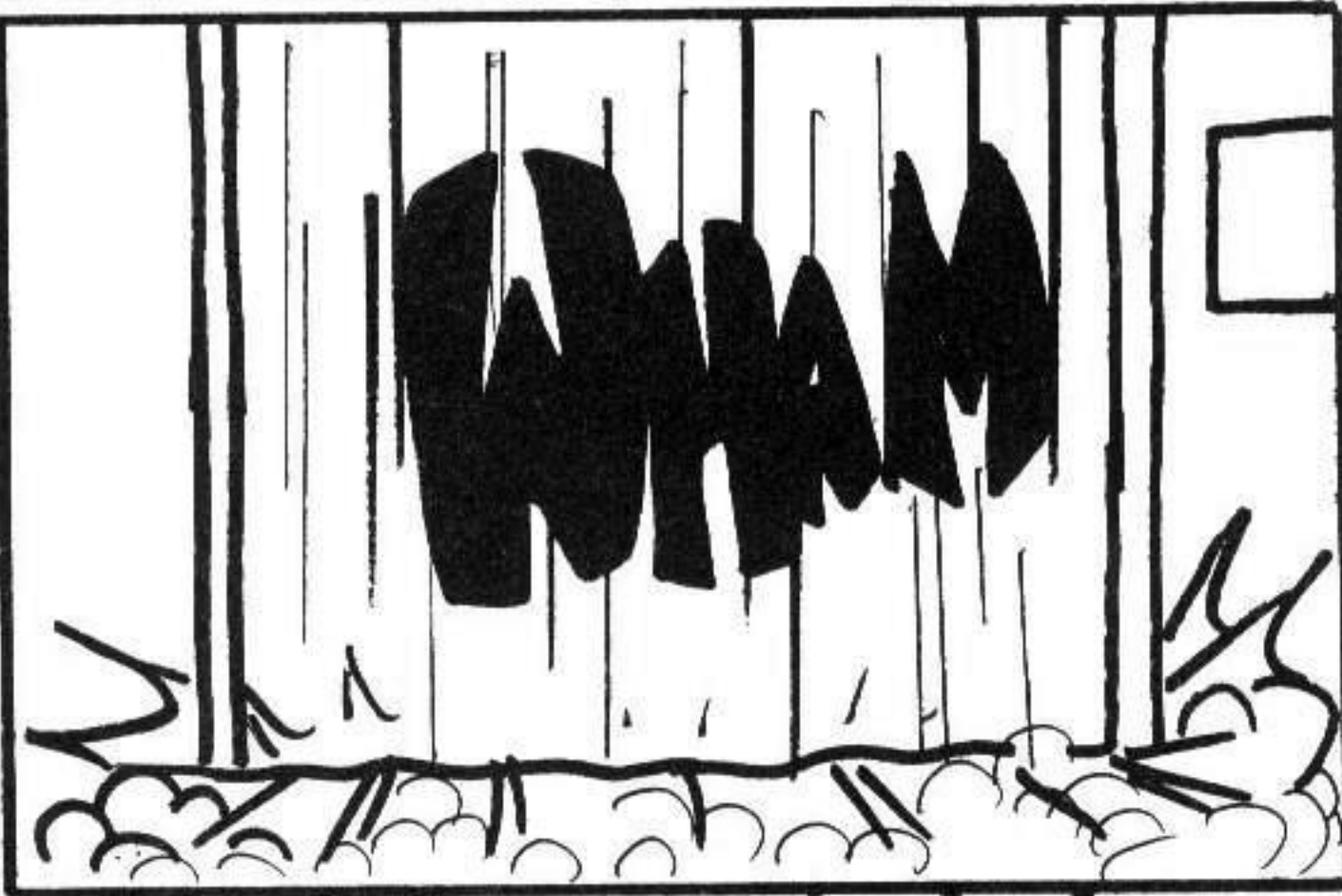
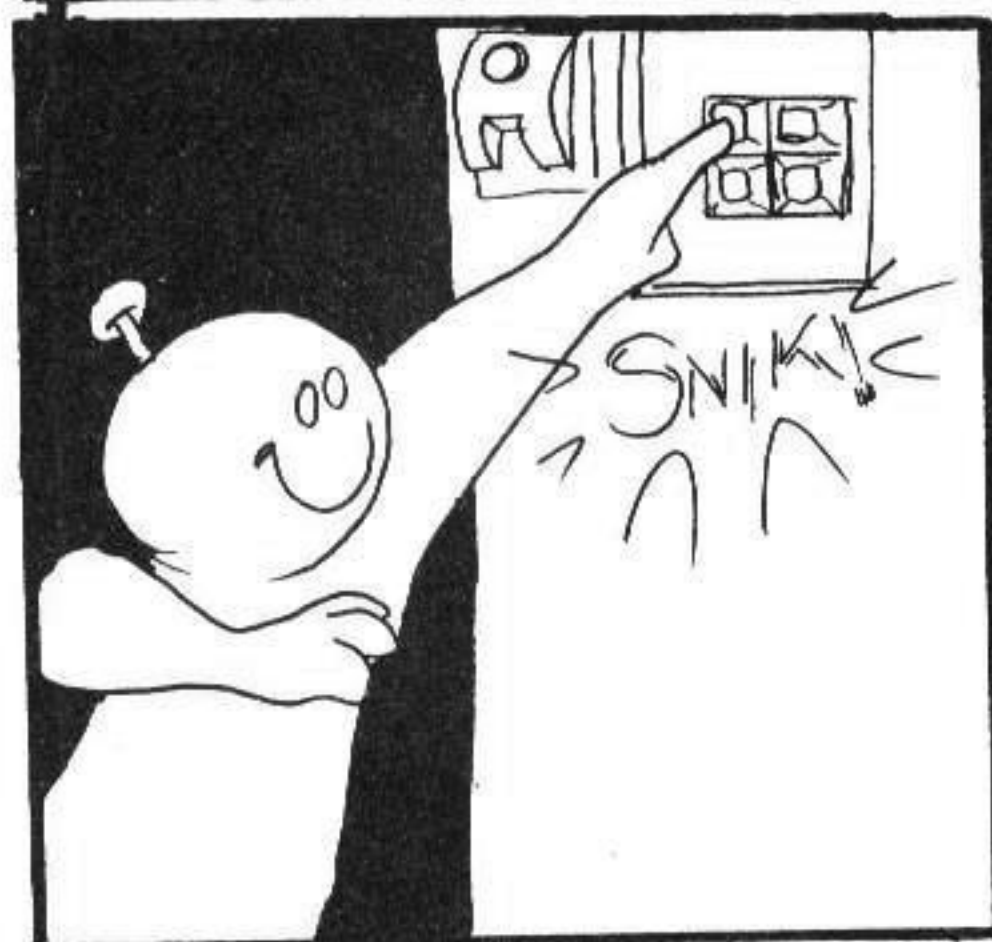
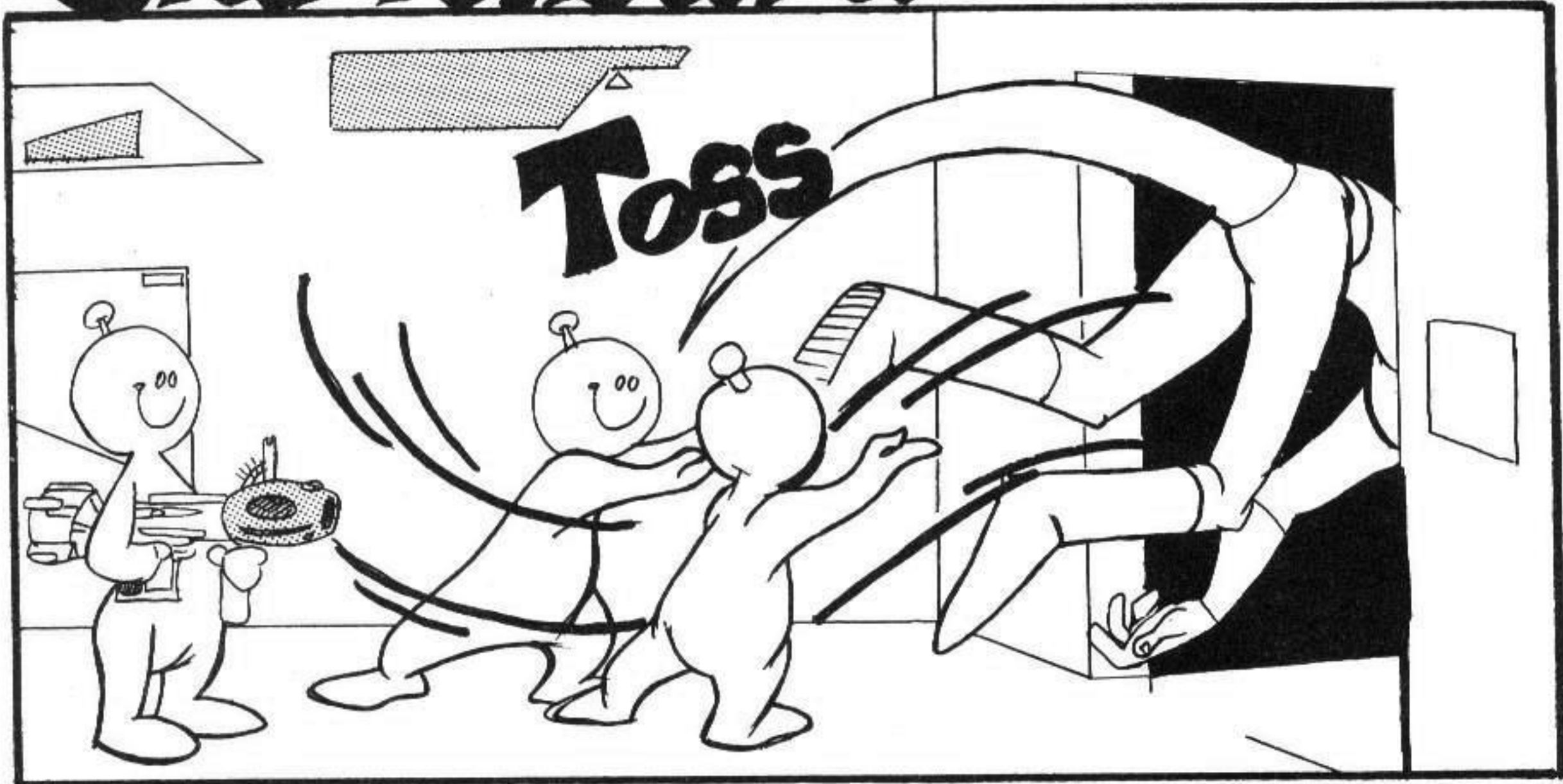


TURB="Wild", Not born a "horse." A Trac is born one.

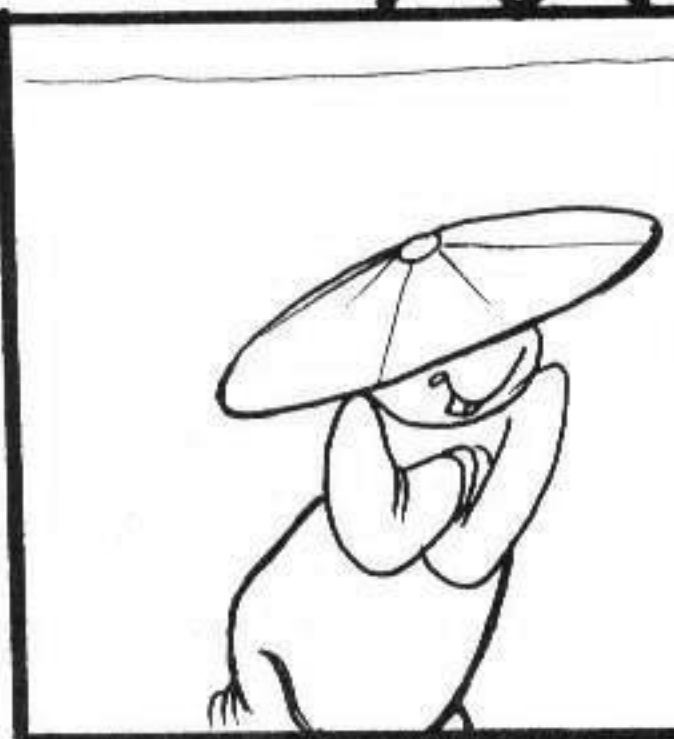
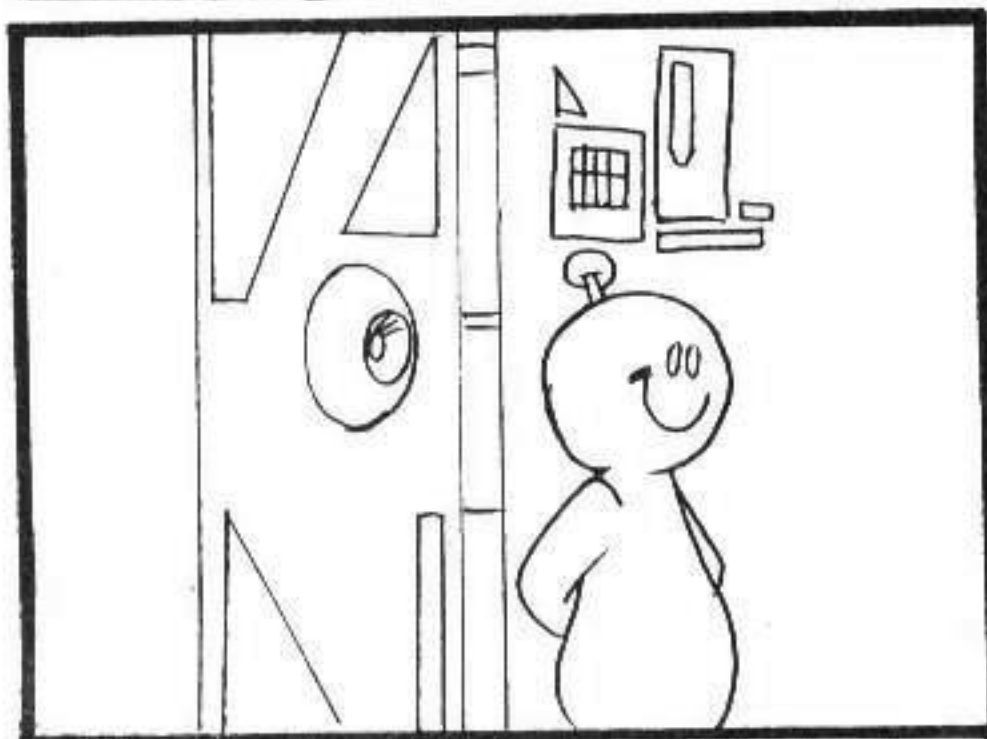


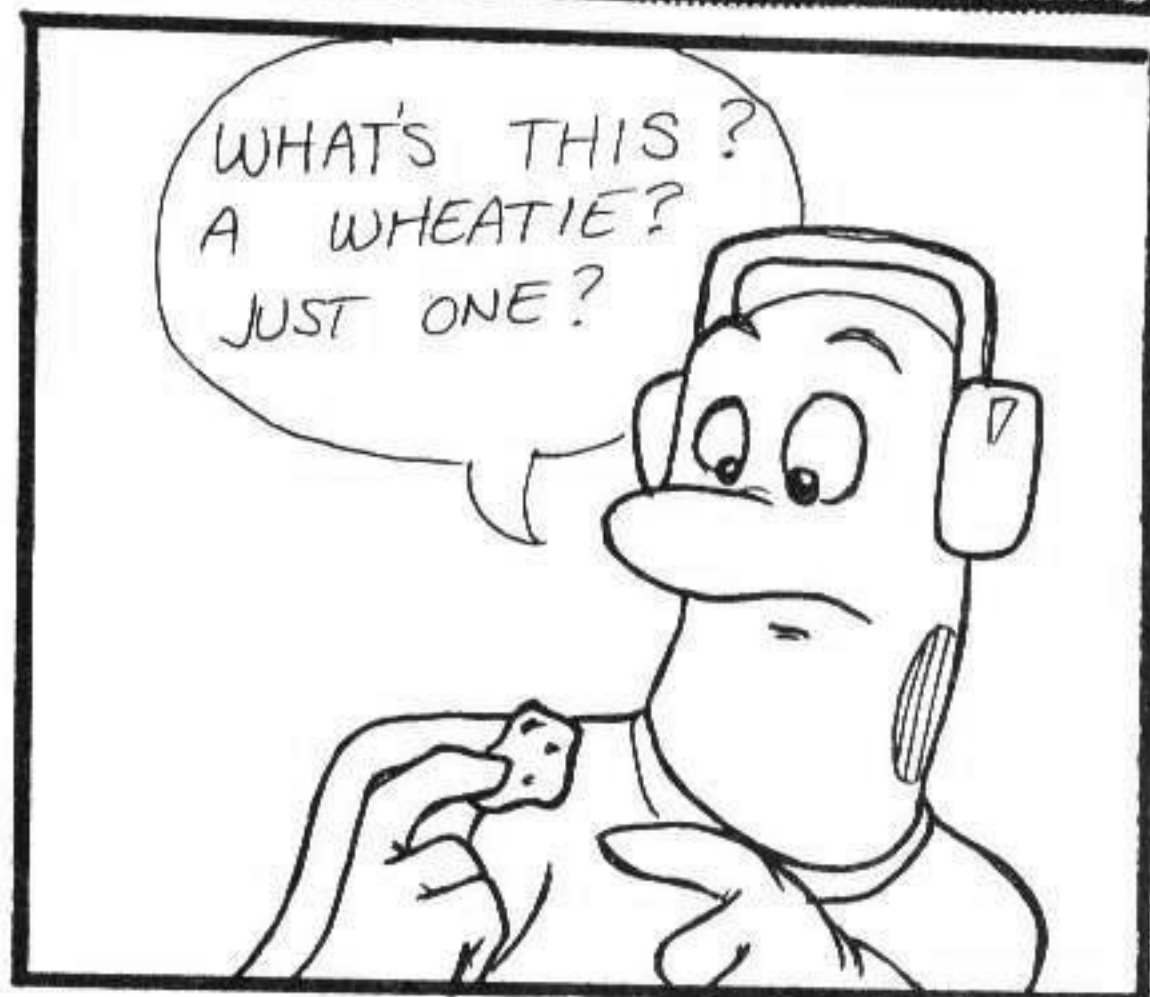
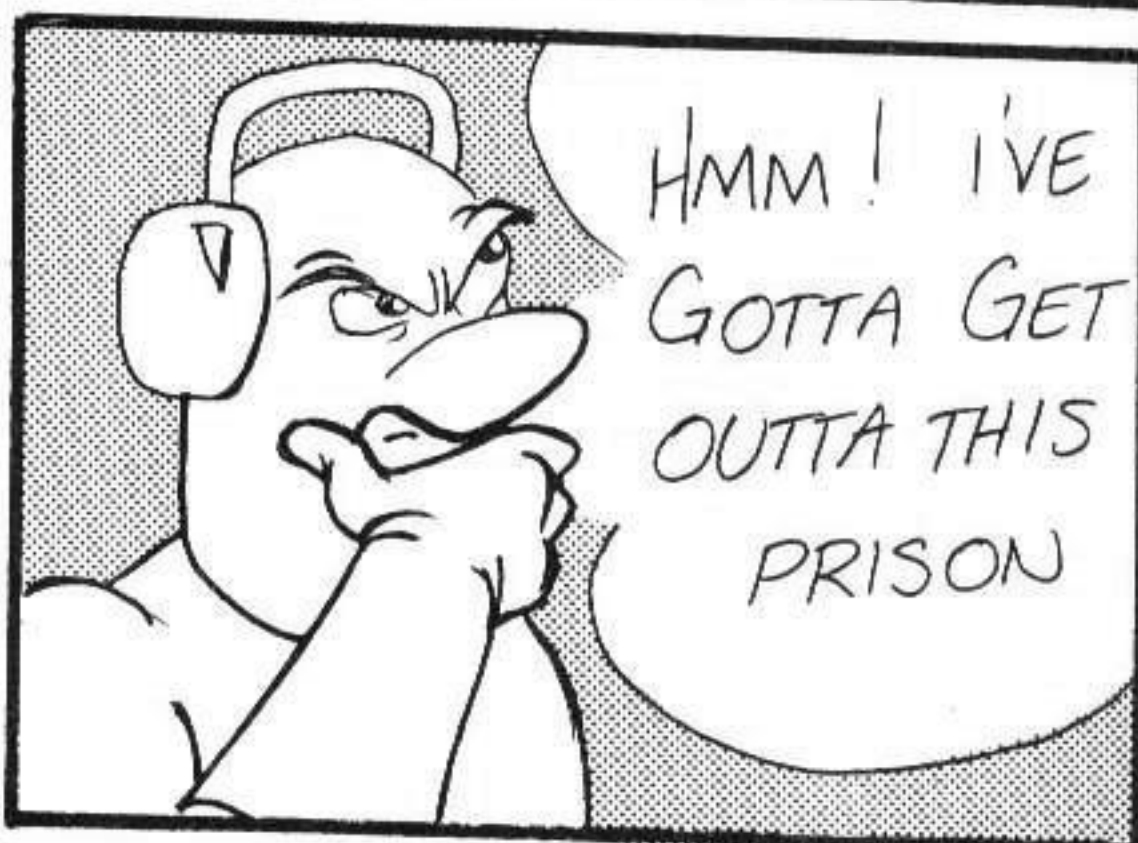
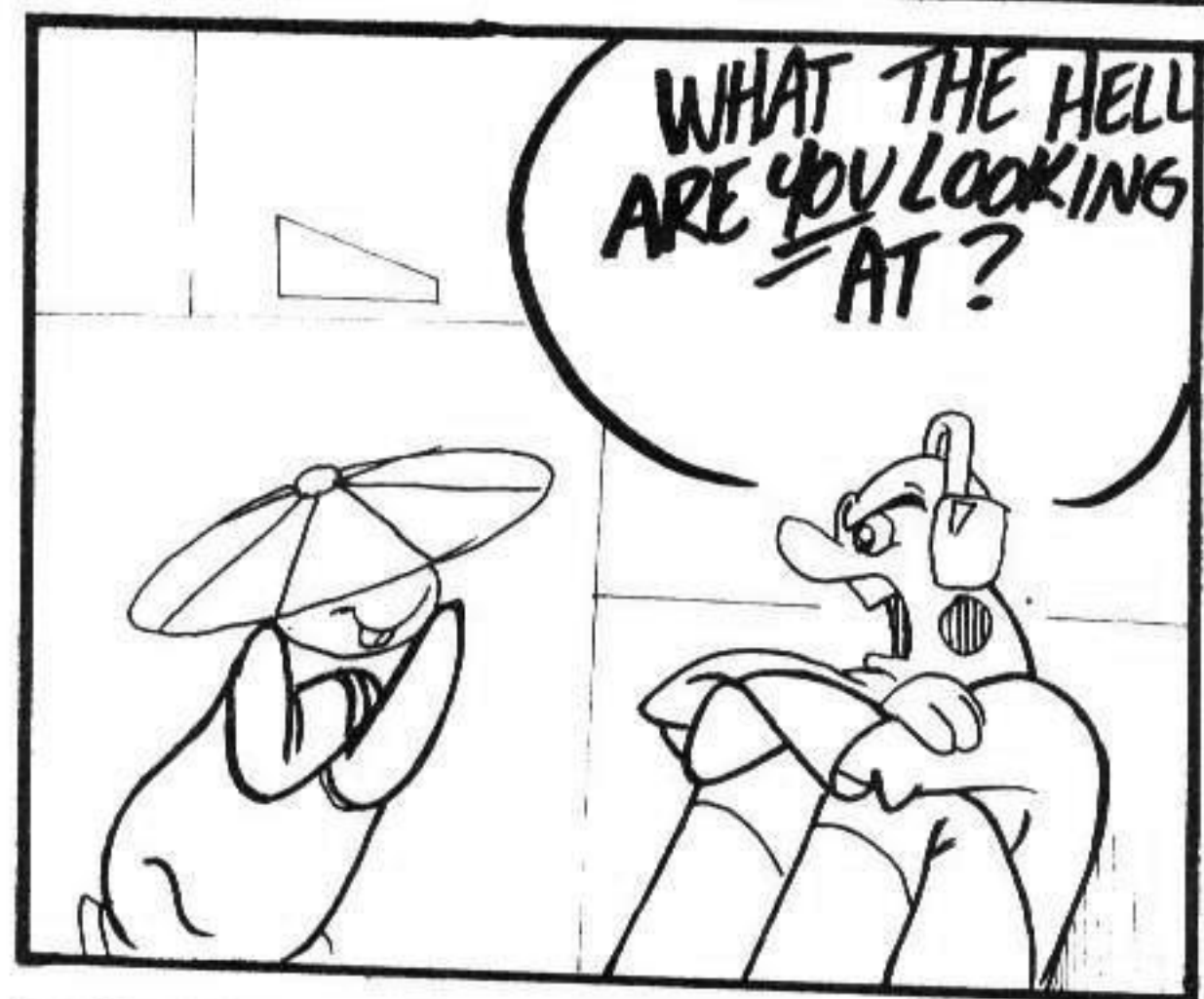
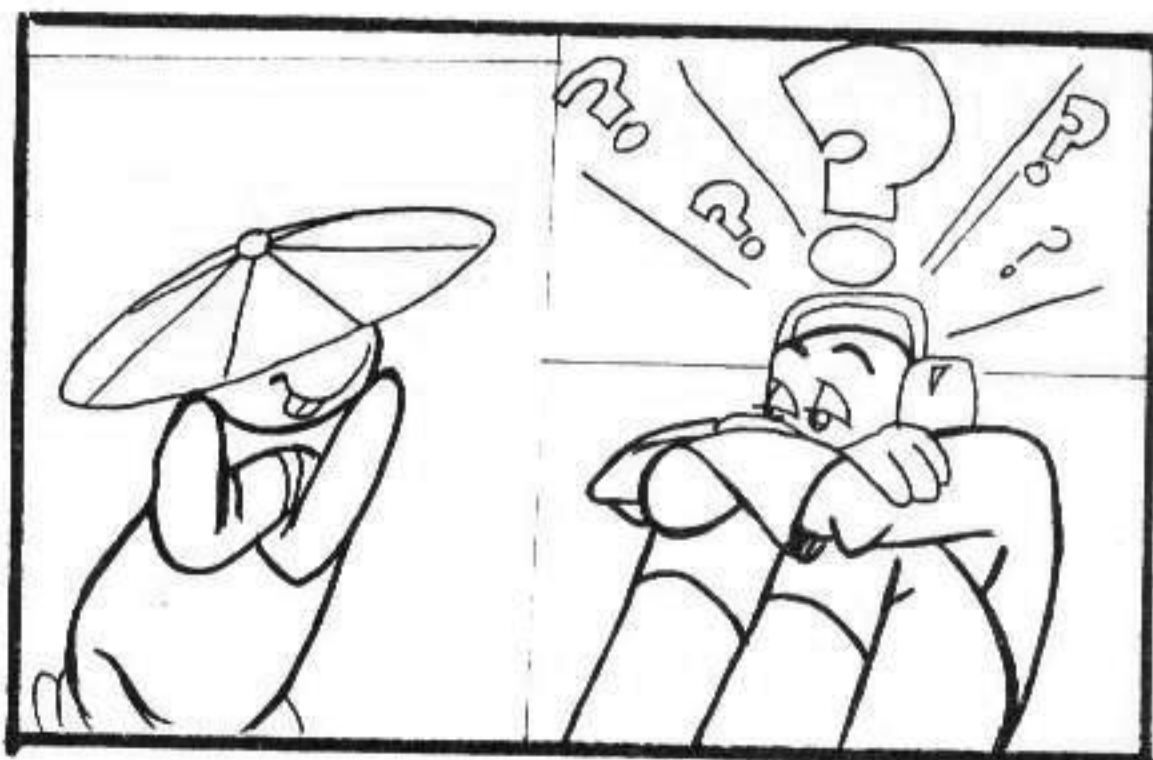
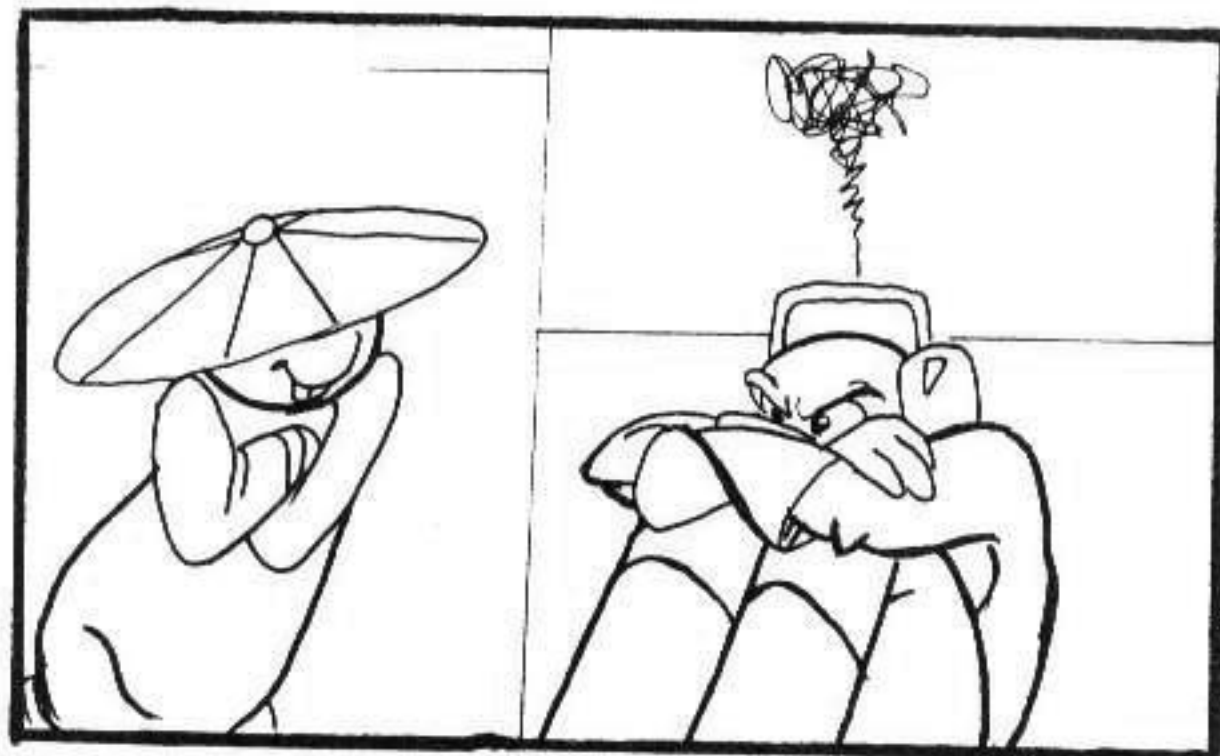
EIN ENDE.

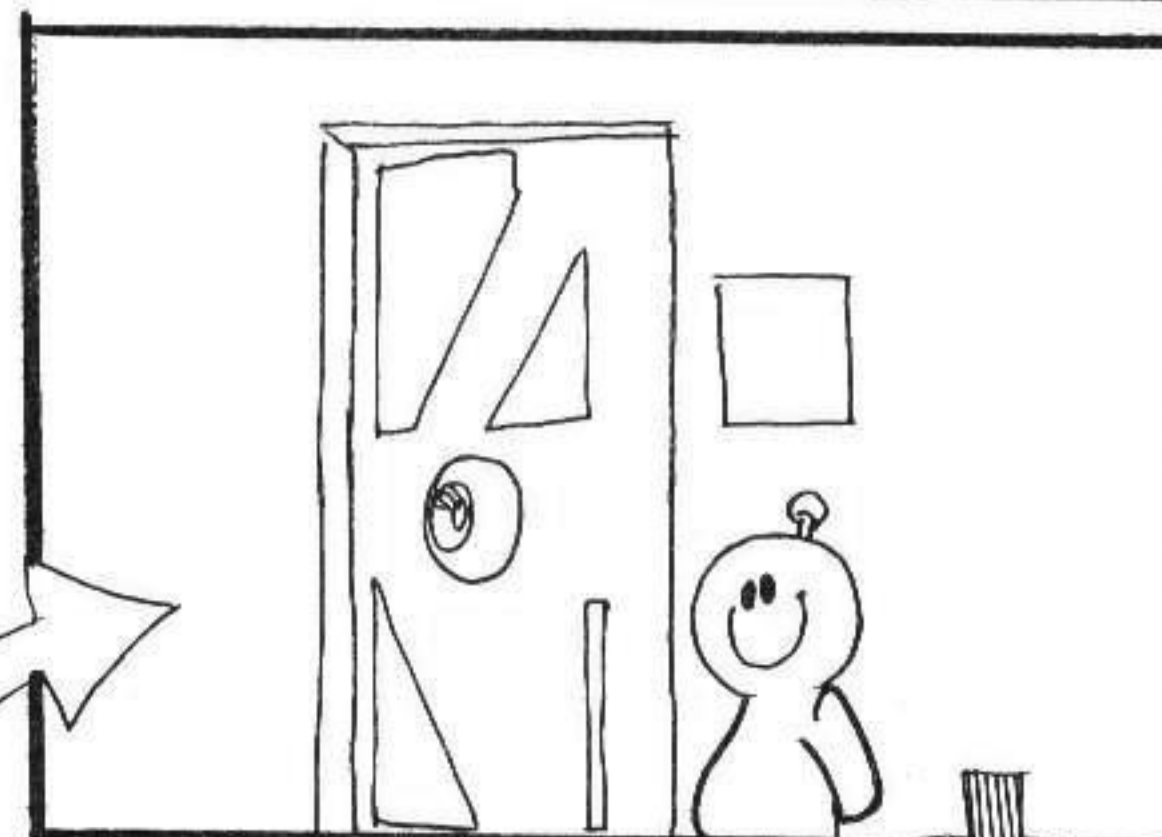
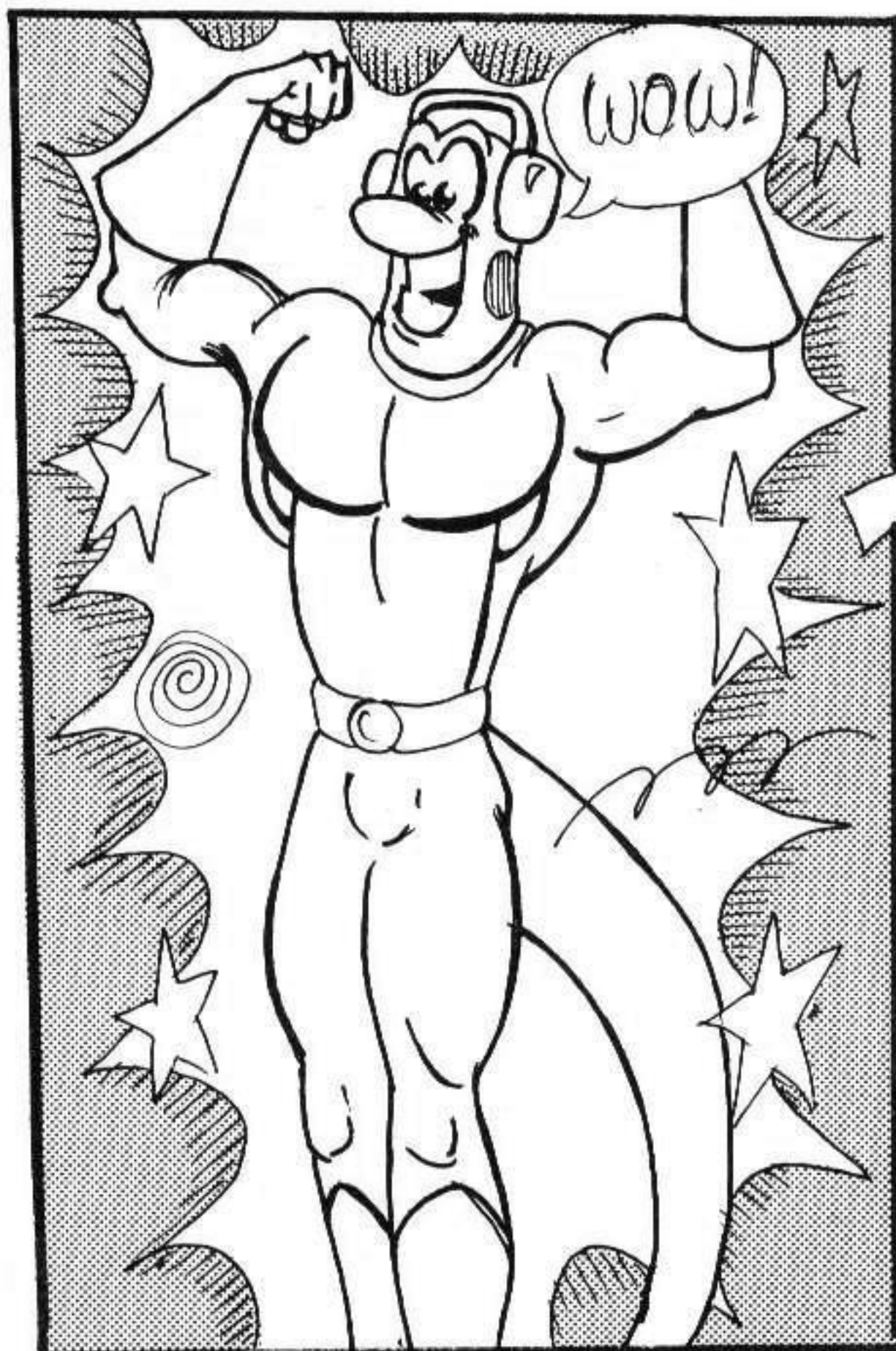
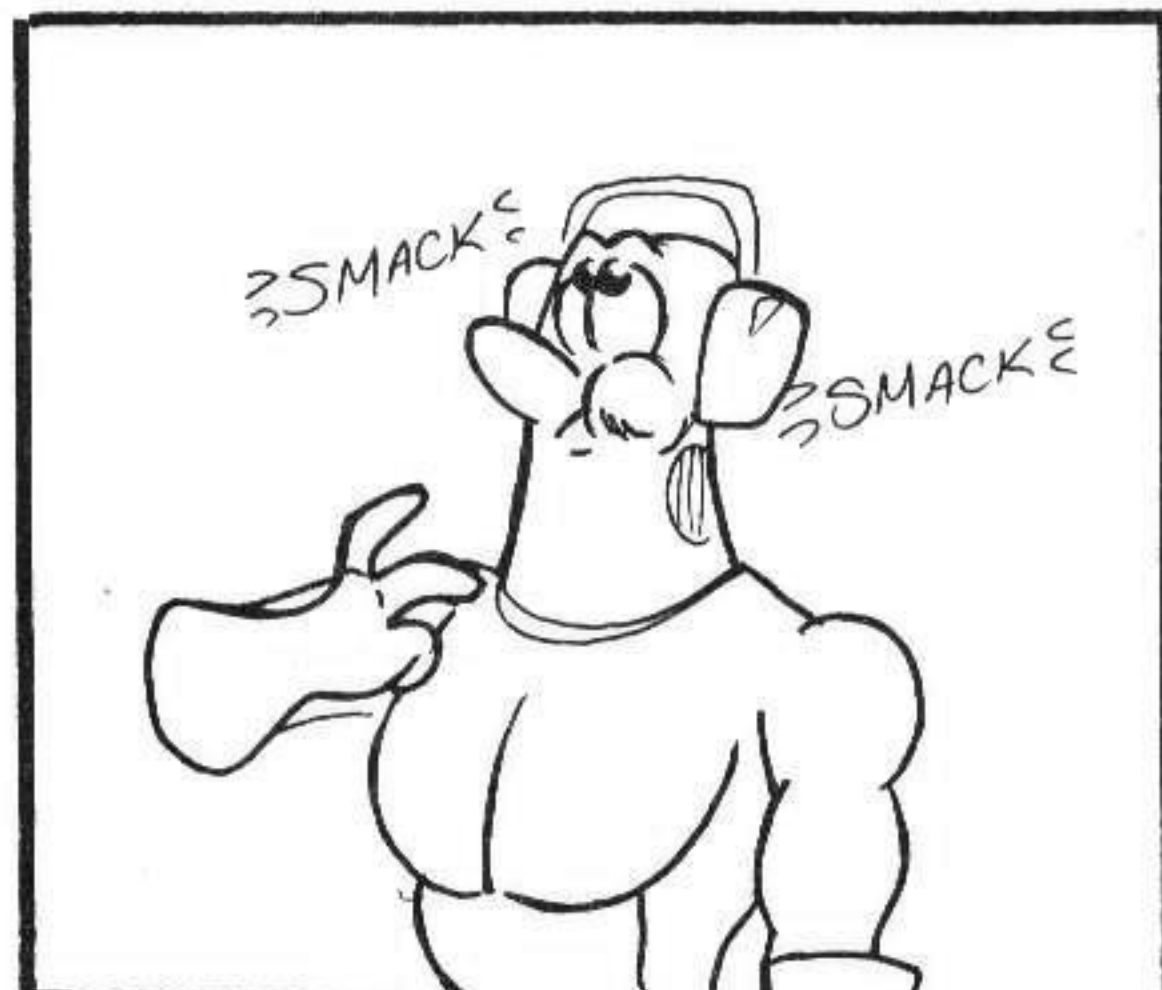
Star Lizard

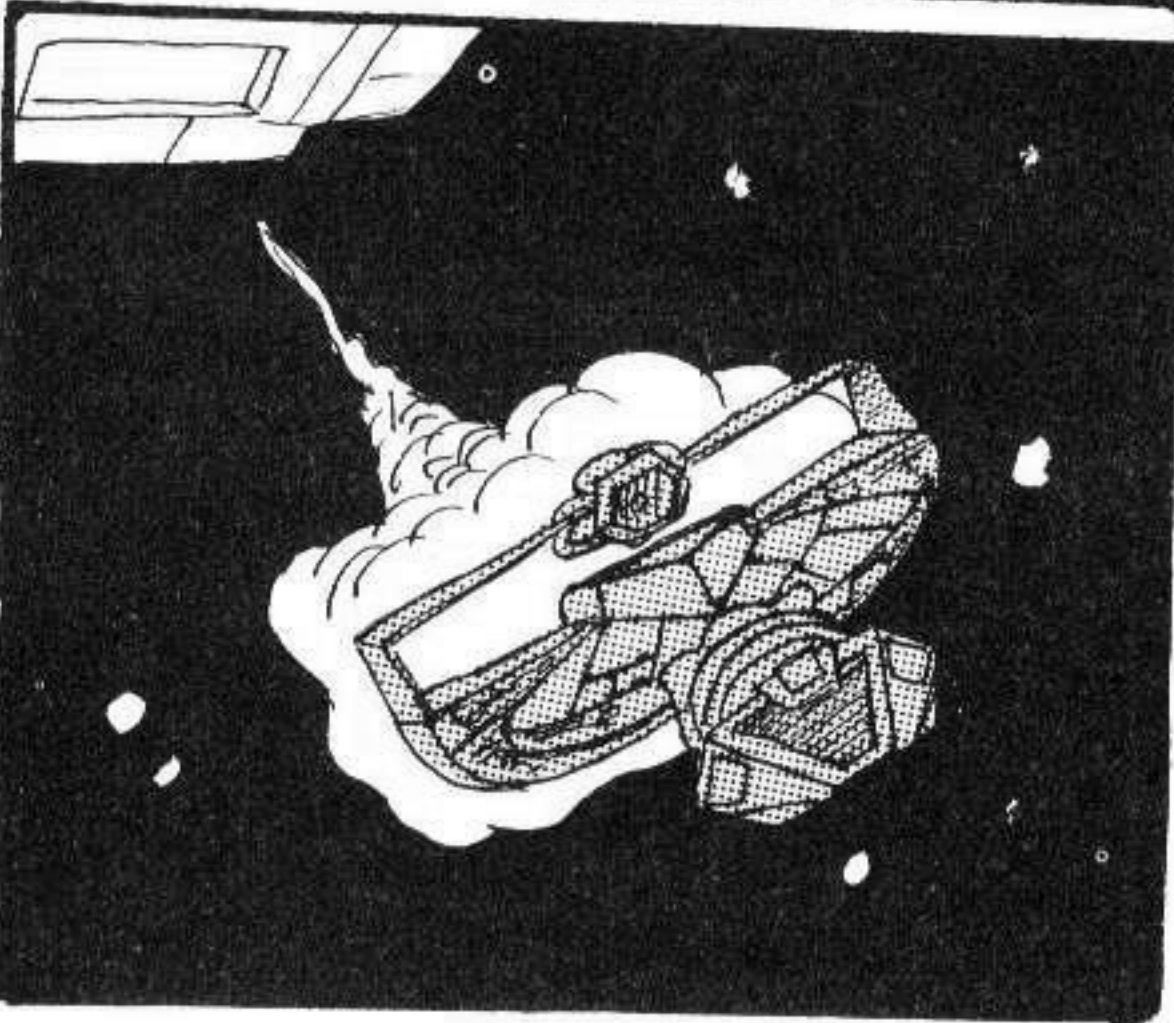
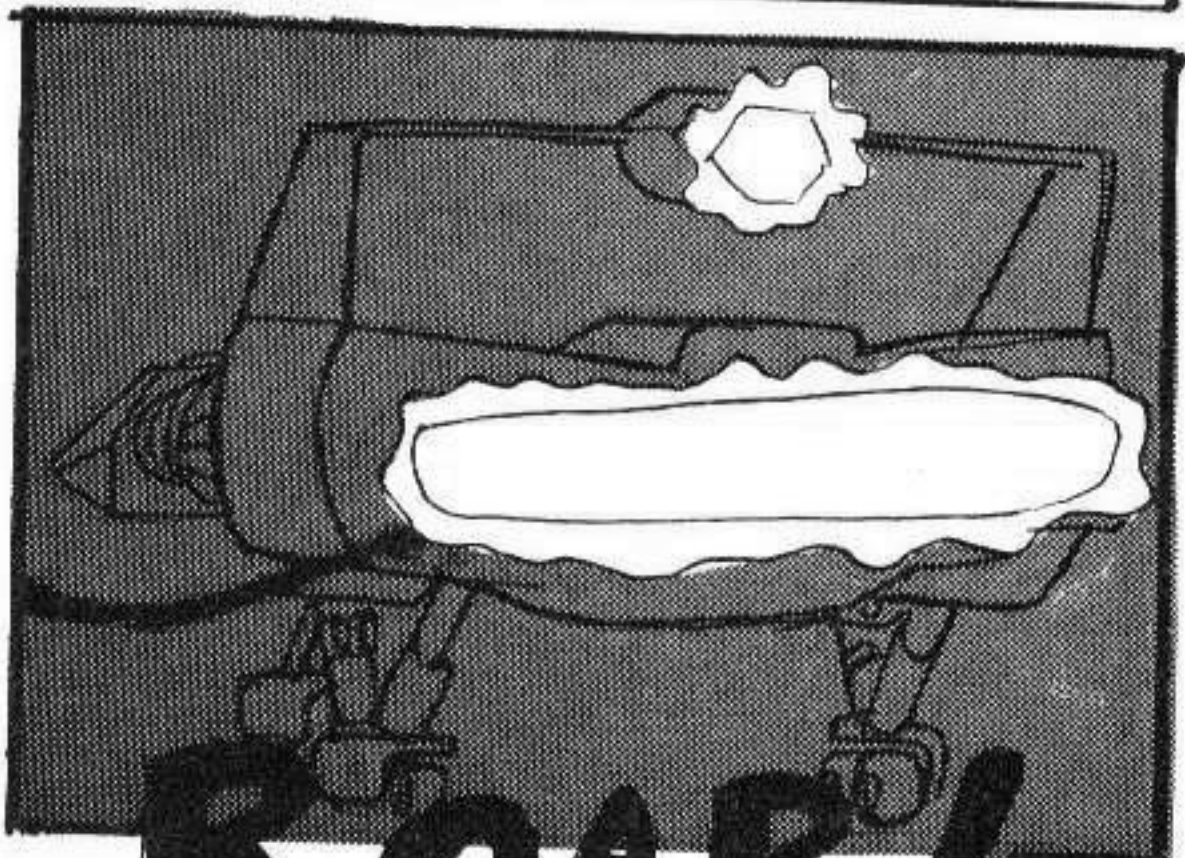
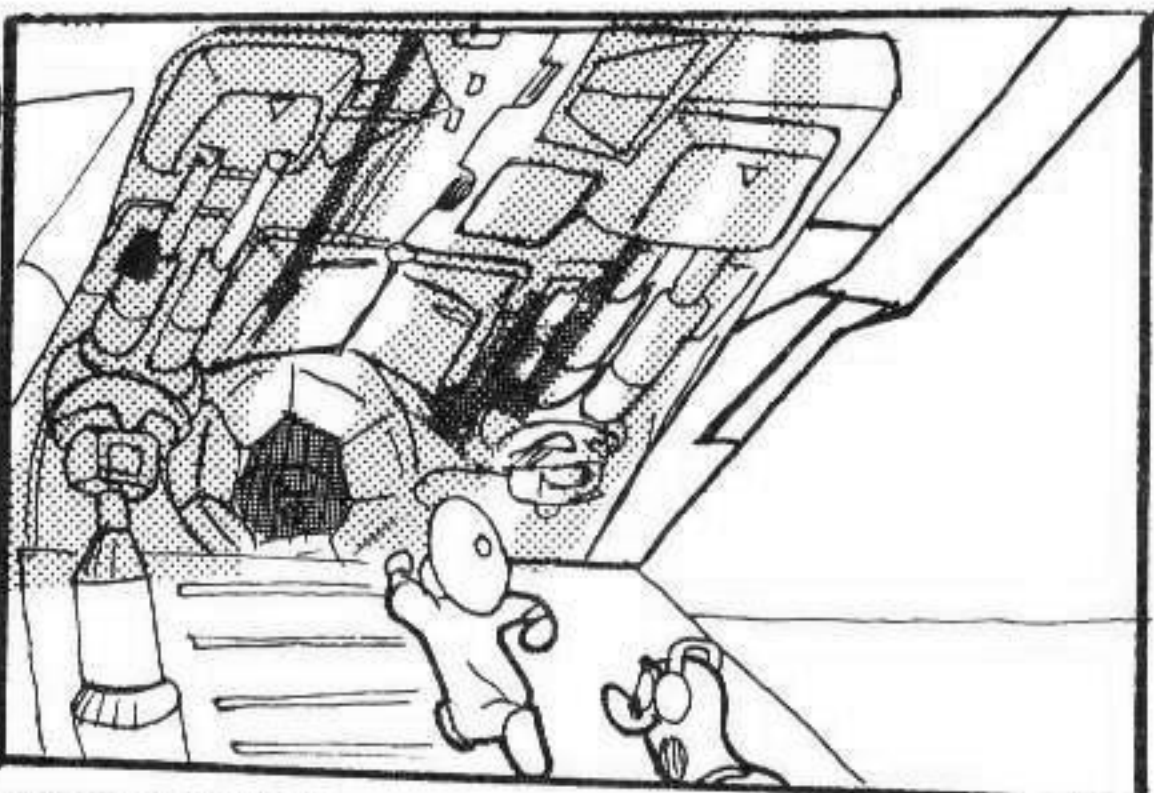
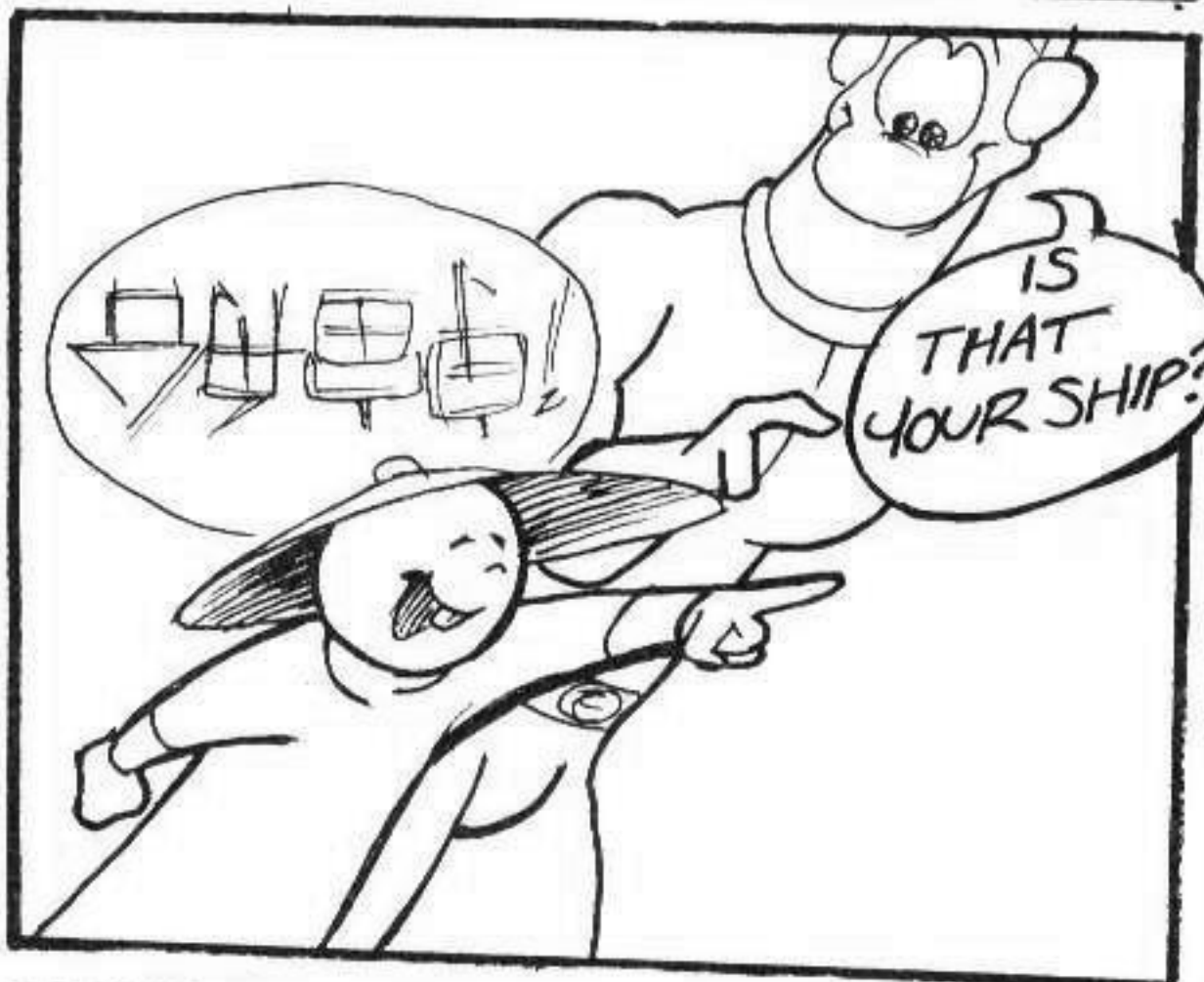


THAT HURT
YOU STUPID
LITTLE SON
OF A -









COMING NEXT ISSUE...

THE FINAL CHAPTER!!

DON'T MISS IT!!

IT'S TIME FOR.

D. Mark Zone



DALMATION ALLEY!

FLAGPOLE

I-54 1/4

END

TROUBLE

OUR HEROES

ENCOUNTERED ONE OF NATURE'S SURPRISES, A DALMATION ATTACK PARTY. LET'S SEE HOW OUR GROUP, BUCKY BOARDDELLO, CHERRIES JUBILEE, COLONEL PEPPERED, AND LOVABLE SEARGENT SAVAGE HANDLE IT. I'M D. MARK ZONE, BYE.

PAID FOR BY FACELESS CORPORATIONS WHO DON'T GIVE A DAMN.

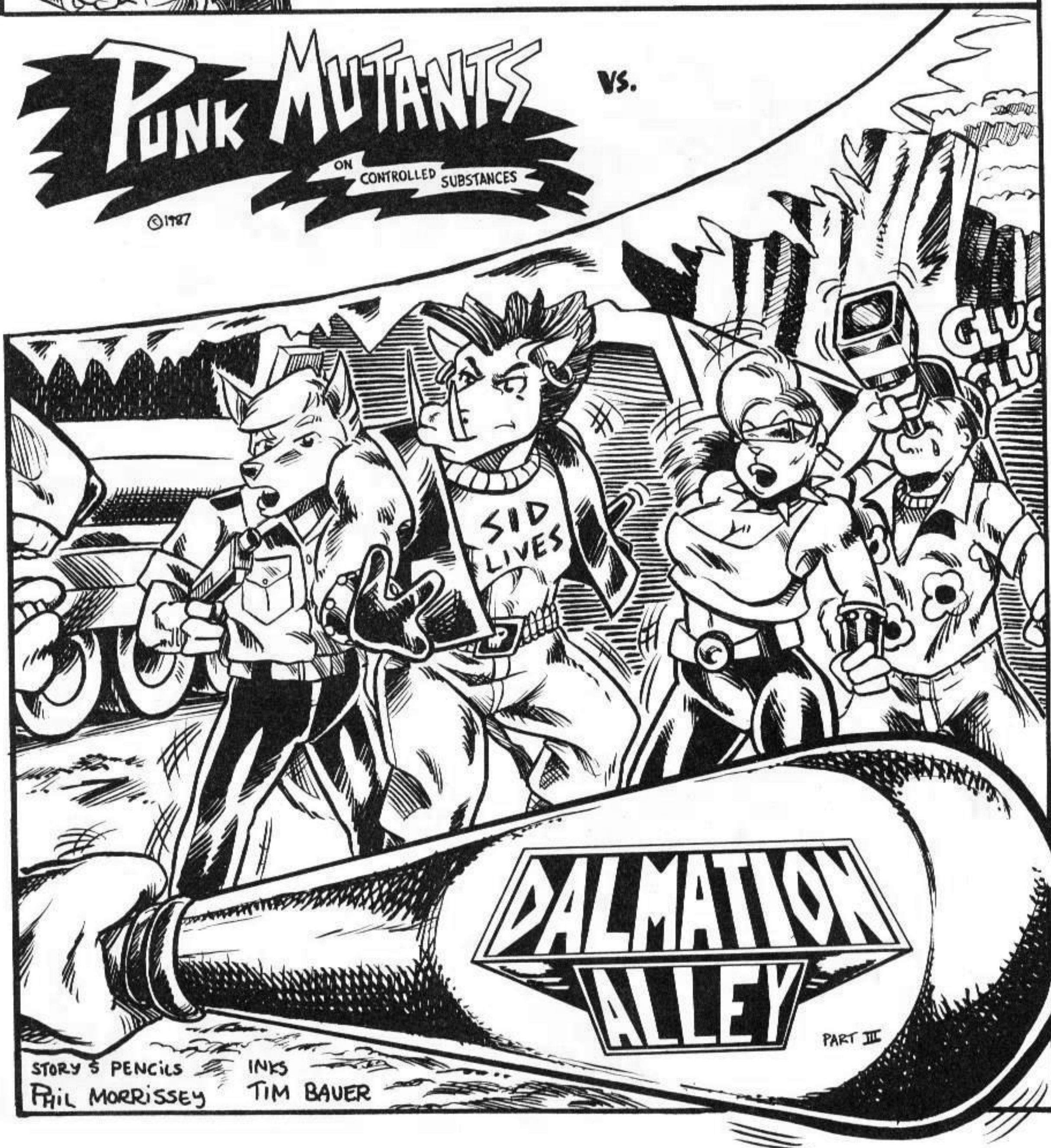
HELLO, D. MARK ZONE, HISTORIAN, HERE WITH A NEW AND EXCITING STORY OF NATURE. SINCE TH' FIRST ENTRANCE, BY OUR GANG, INTO TH' ALLEY, IT HAS BEEN A WONDERFUL VOYAGE, EXPERIENCING ALL TH' NATURAL (?) BEAUTY THAT MAKES UP TH' ALLEY! ESPECIALLY TH' EXTENSIVE WILDLIFE POPULATIONS THAT CO-HABITATE THERE, AHH THE GLORY OF NATURE. ACCORDIN' TO TH' MAP (PAID FOR BY TH' FINE FOLK' AT PUBLIC BROADCASTING) OUR HEROES ARE 'BOUT 1/2 WAY DOWN TH' ALLEY WHEN THEY

PUNK MUTANTS

ON CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

©1987

VS.



STORY & PENCILS
PHIL MORRISSEY

INKS
TIM BAUER

PART III

AND NOW AN
EXPERIMENT.
THIS STRIP
FOR ONE,
READ IT-

ONE

-PAGE WILL
DO A RADICAL
CHANGE IN
STORYTELLING!
YOU HAVE BEEN
WARNED !!!!







IT'S DYING TIME!



OH SHIT!

**NEXT:
THE ALLEY ENDS
AND CHERRIES HAS
A BLAST!**

JL COON

IN

"PLEASURE PALACE"

PART 2

WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY
T. LINEHAN '87

WHILE OUTSIDE, I WAS REMINISING ABOUT THE THEATRE'S GLORY DAYS, WHEN IT WAS "THE UPTOWN" AND ALL THE GOOD TIMES I HAD THERE ON DATES AND SUCH...



UNTIL "MAGENTA RED", ONE OF JOCKO'S HOOKERS SHOWED, WANTING TO KNOW WHY LT. BOAR WAS A HALF AN HOUR LATE. SOME THING WAS WRONG!

BY THE TIME, WE'D ARRIVED, "JOCKO" WAS QUITE DEAD, NOT ONLY DID WE LOSE A "SNITCH", THERE WAS NOW A KILLER LOOSE IN THE THEATRE.



IN THE LAST ISSUE, ME AND LT. BOAR WERE ASSIGNED TO STAKE-OUT "THE PUSSYCAT", A PORNO THEATRE, WORKING INSIDE LT. BOAR WAS TO MEET SNITCH, "JOCKO DELANEY" TO GET SOME INFO ON A BIG UPCOMING COKE DEAL.



WHILE LT. BOAR WAS EXERCISING HIS LIBIDO AT THE EIGHT O'CLOCK SHOW OF "BEAVERS IN BONDAGE", "JOCKO" HAD BEEN STABBED IN THE MEN'S ROOM.



"Holy FRIP!!! I KNEW IT! I KNEW IT! THAT LITTLE RUG-RAT! NOW WHAT AM I GONNA DO!"

... REQUESTING BACK-UP AND AN AMBULANCE TO THE Pussycat.



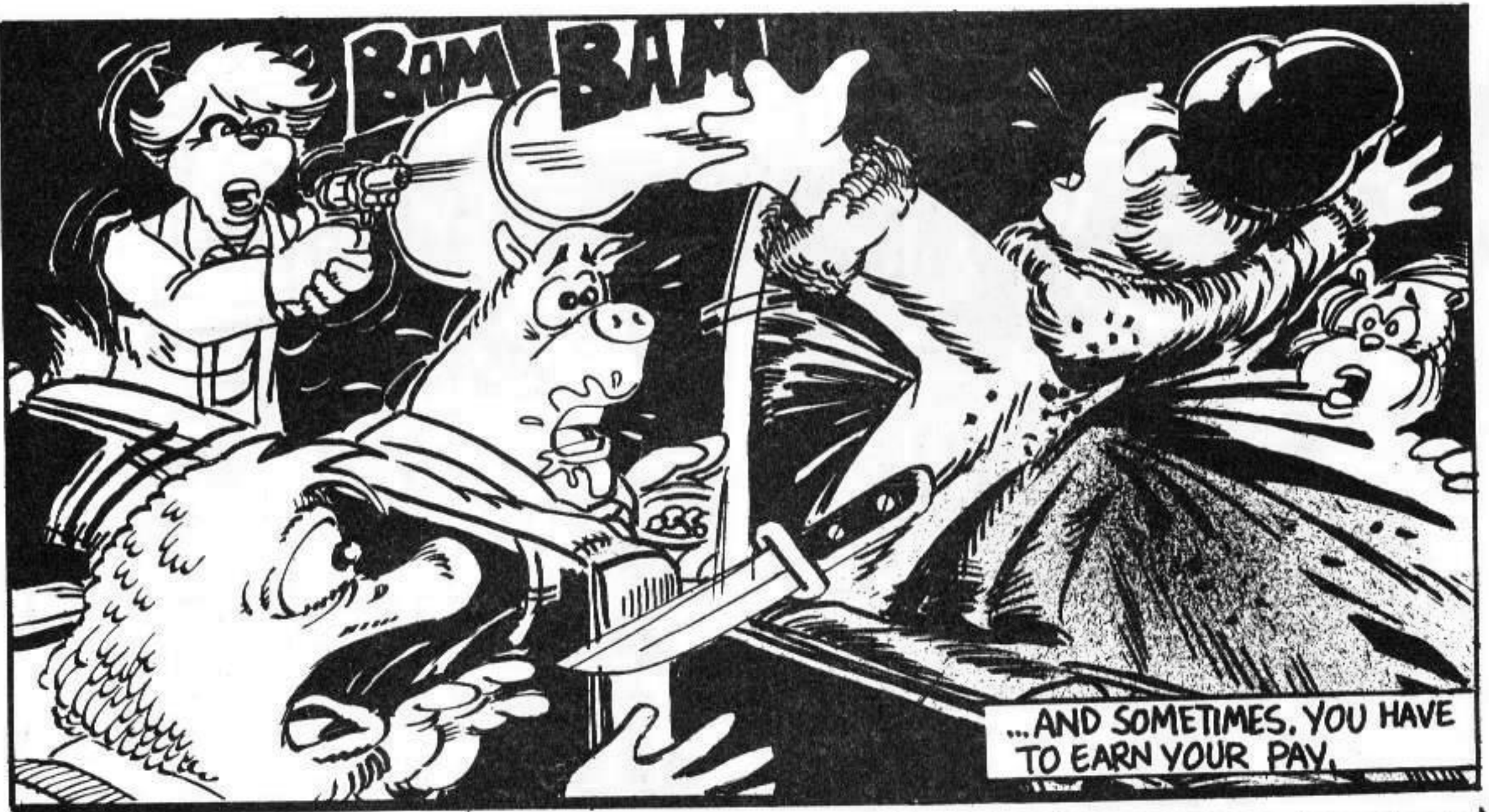


SOME TIMES, YOU SEE WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO...



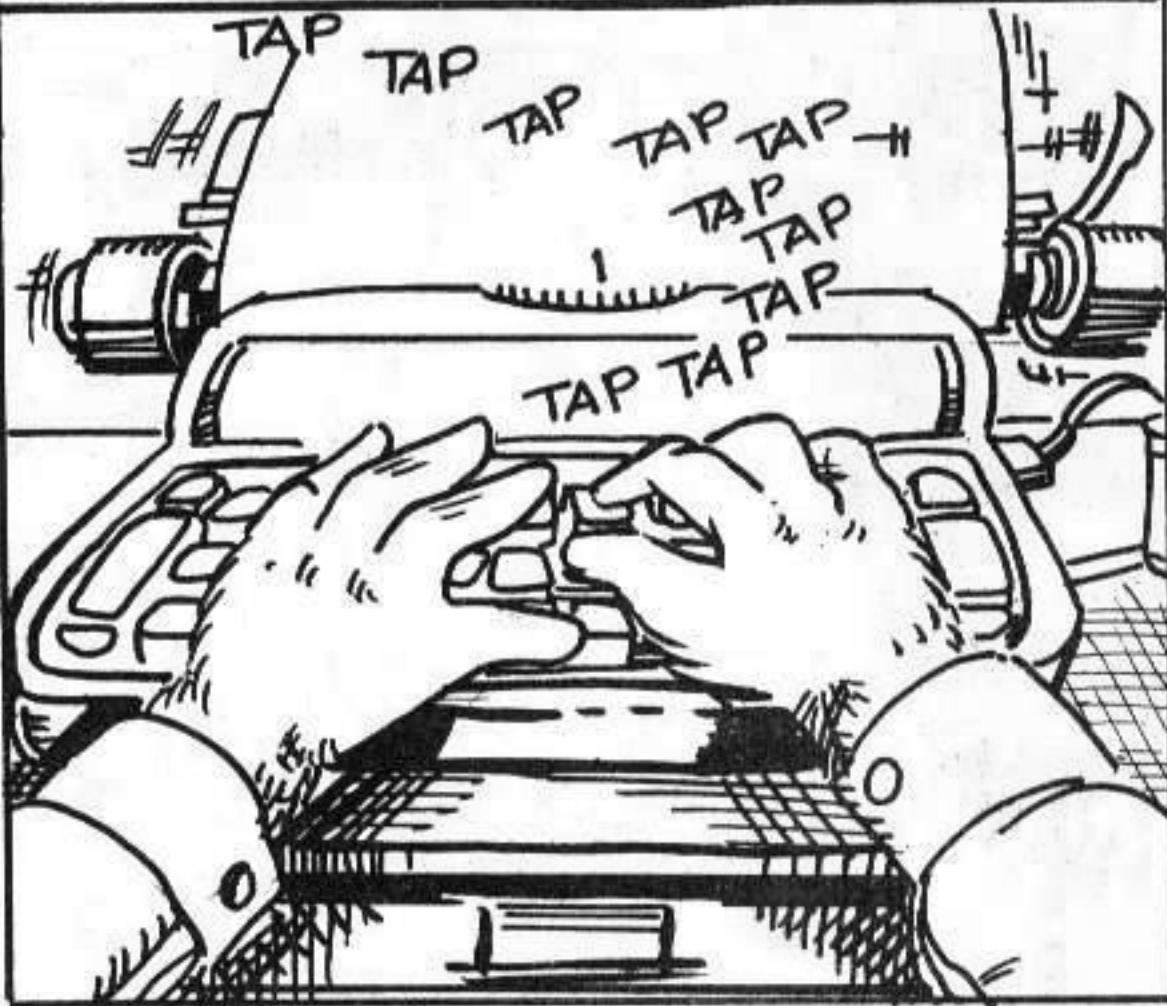
... AND THAT'S WHEN YOU HAVE TO MOVE FAST!!!





...AND SOMETIMES, YOU HAVE TO EARN YOUR PAY.

IT WOULD ALL BE IN MY REPORT, HOW WE HAD BOTCHED THE WHOLE ASSIGNMENT AND WHY FOUR VIOLENT DEATHS HAD OCCURED BECAUSE OF IT. BUT WHO DO YOU BLAME, REALLY?



THE DOUBLE FEATURES THAT MR McCABE SHOWED AT THE UPTOWN WERE A PART OF MY LIFE, AND HOW DO I THANK THE GUY, BY KILLING THE POOR MAN. NICE GOING!

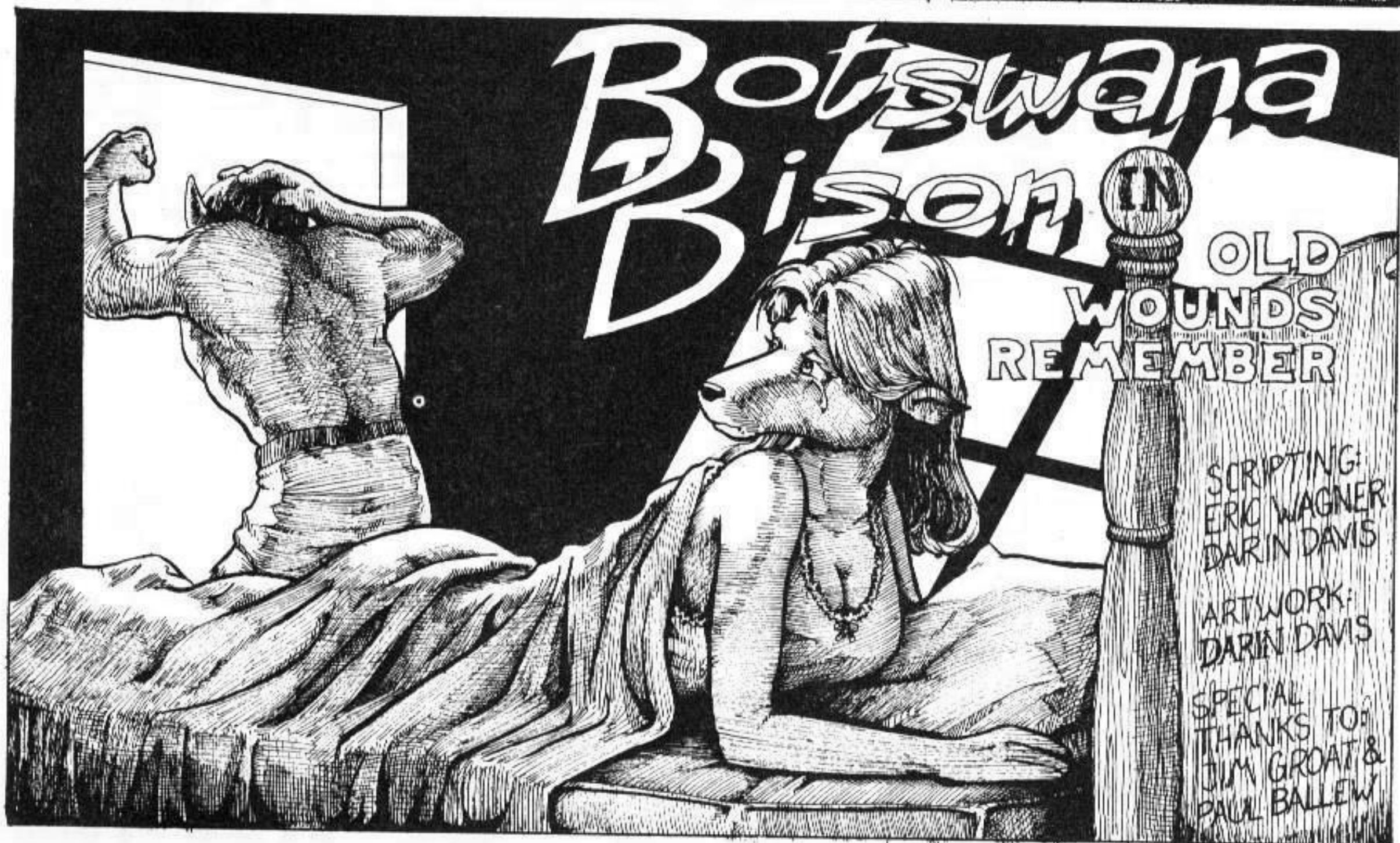
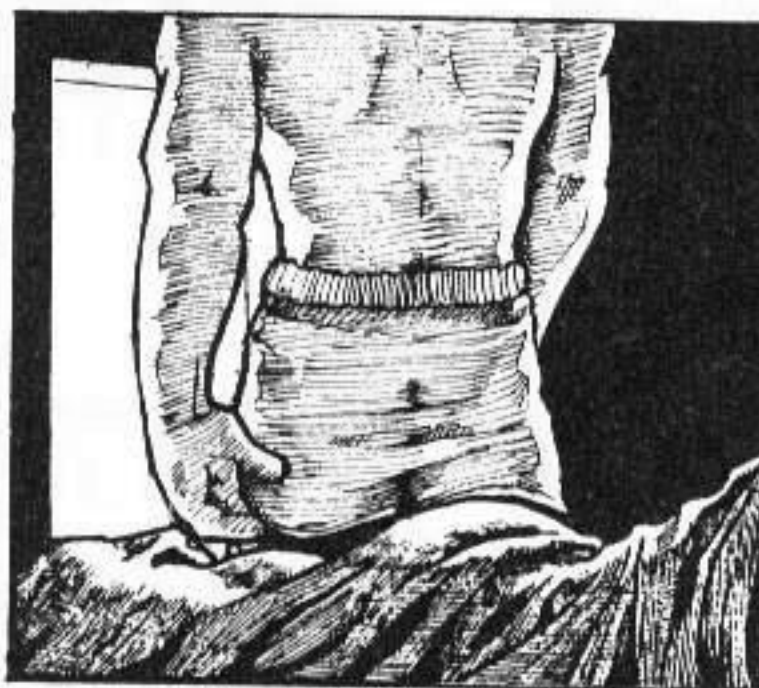


I LEARNED A LOT AT THOSE DOUBLE- FEATURES, MANY THINGS LIKE GOOD WINNING OVER EVIL, THE HERO ALWAYS GETS THE GIRL. HE NEVER RUNS OUT OF BULLETS...



... FINALLY, HE ALWAYS HAD A PARTNER, THAT HE COULD TRUST AND DEPEND HIS LIFE UPON.









ENJOYING YOUR-
SELF, MR. BISON?



GOOD. BUT PLEASE
DON'T RELAX JUST
YET.

I'VE ONE MORE
THING IN MIND
FOR YOU BEFORE
I LET YOU GO.

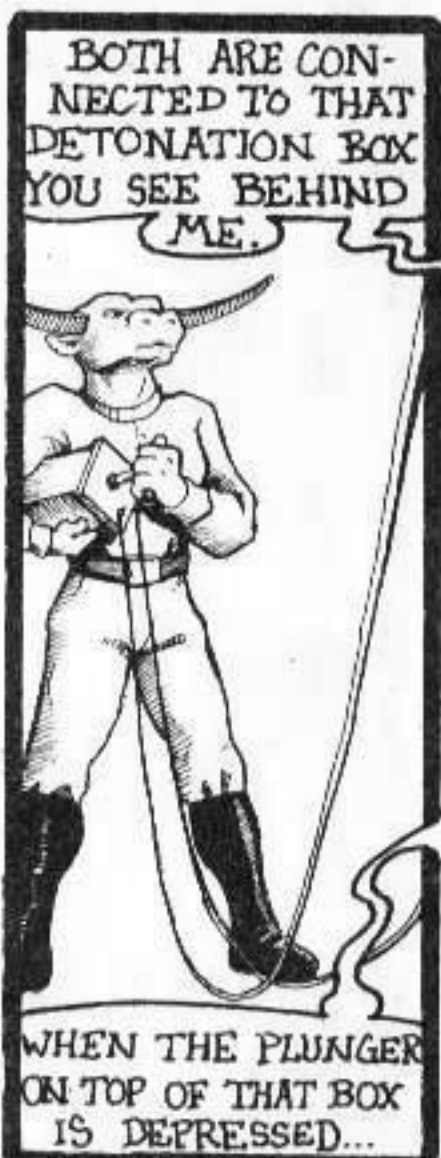


I HOPE YOU
REALIZE
MR. BISON...

THAT THIS IS
ALL FOR YOUR
OWN GOOD.



WHAT I HAVE HERE,
MR. BISON, ARE
TWO WIRES.



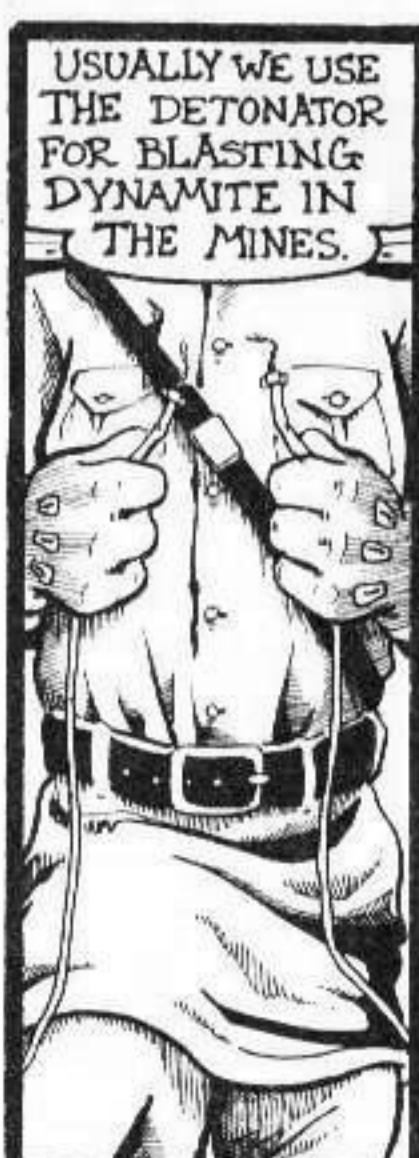
BOTH ARE CON-
NECTED TO THAT
DETONATION BOX
YOU SEE BEHIND
ME.

WHEN THE PLUNGER
ON TOP OF THAT BOX
IS DEPRESSED...



IT SENDS 250
VOLTS OF ELECTRIC
ITY THROUGH
THESE WIRES.

THE FASTER IT'S
DEPRESSED, THE
HIGHER THE
VOLTAGE.



USUALLY WE USE
THE DETONATOR
FOR BLASTING
DYNAMITE IN
THE MINES.



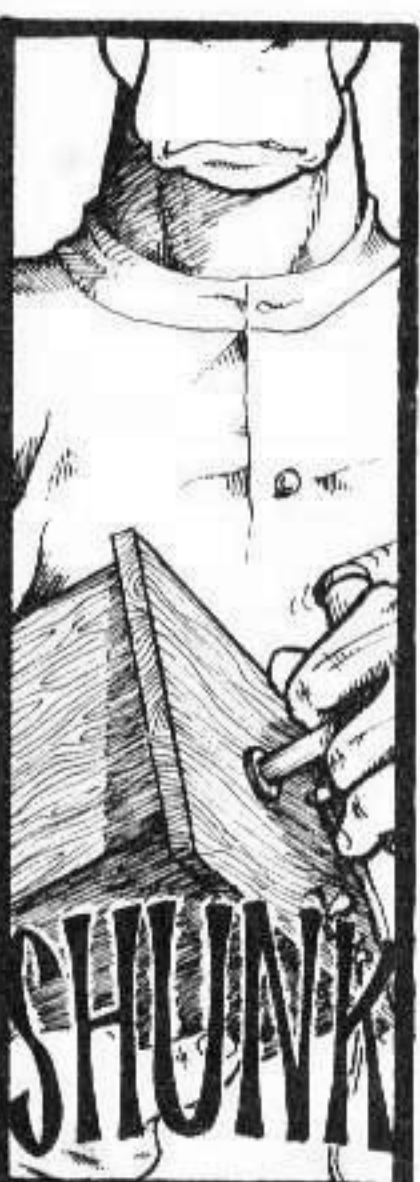
... BUT I LIKE TO
THINK MY METHOD
MUCH MORE
INTERESTING.



SHUNK!



GAAAA



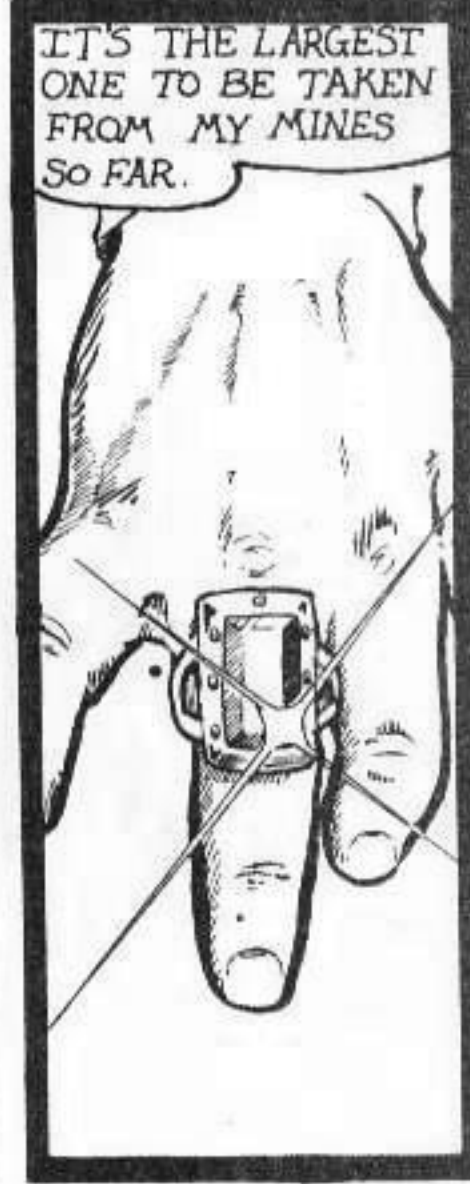
SHUNK

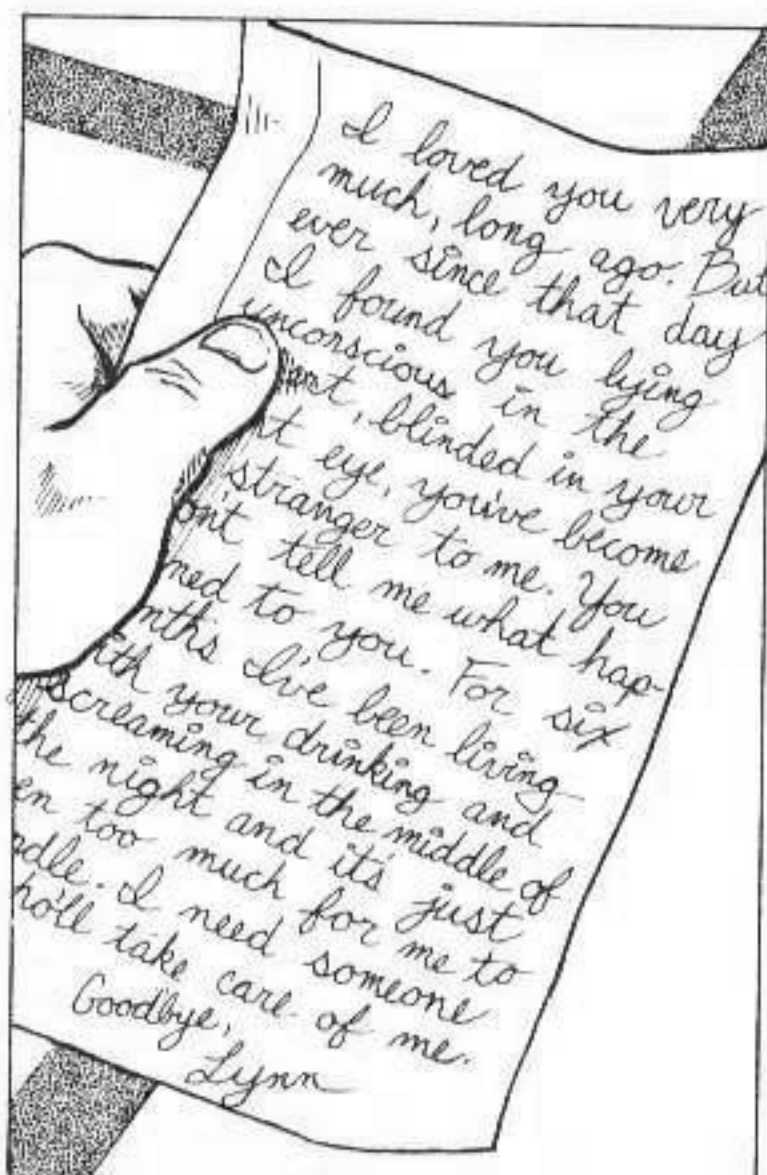
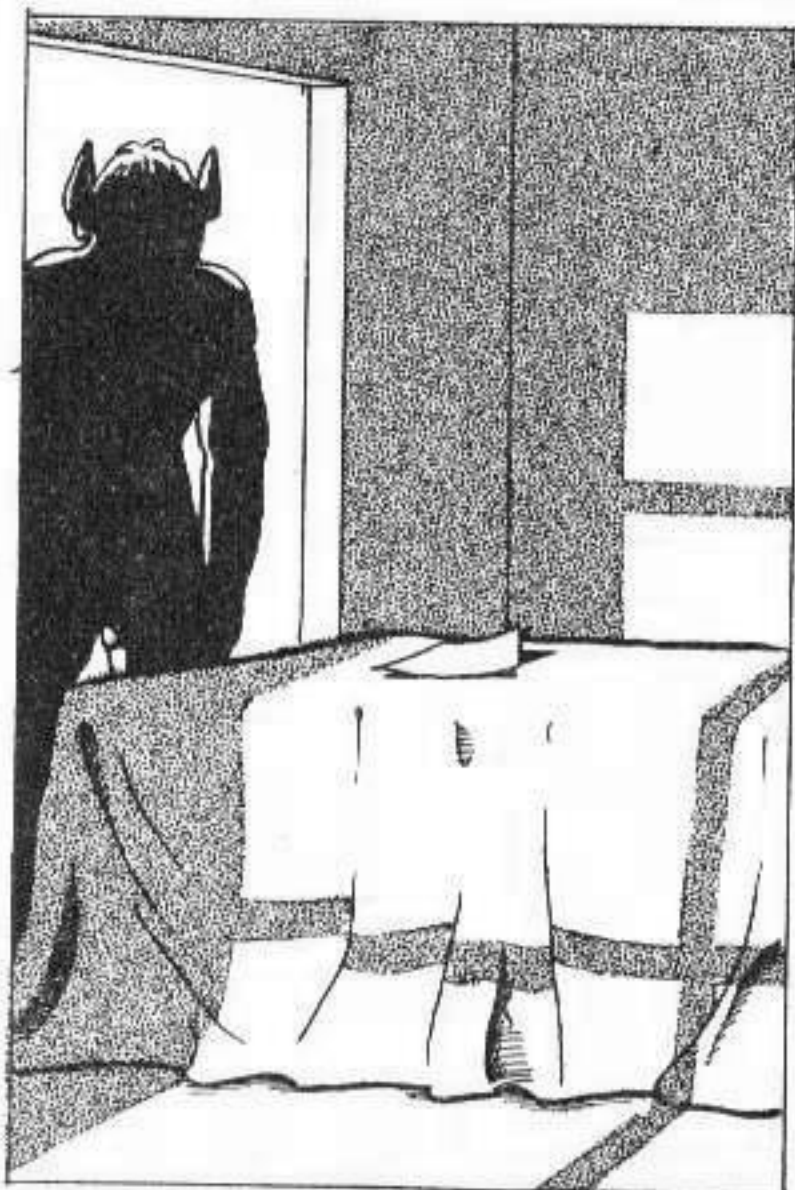
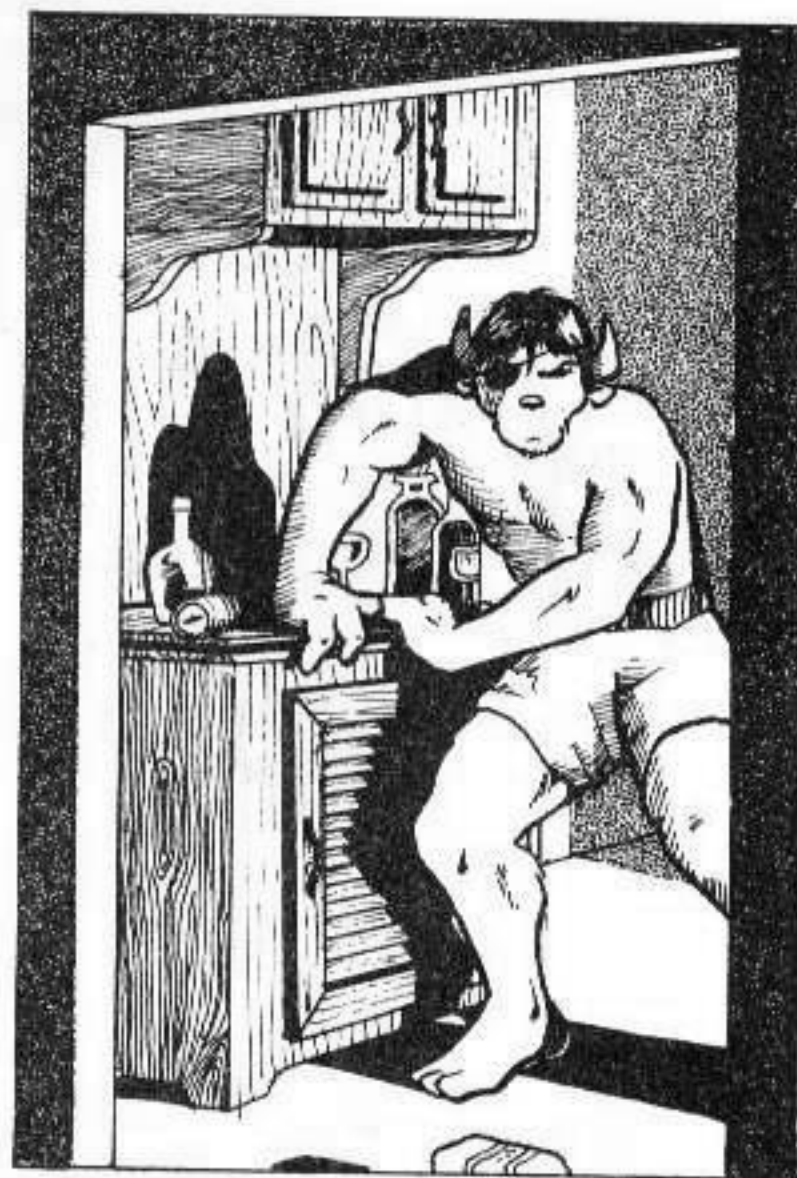
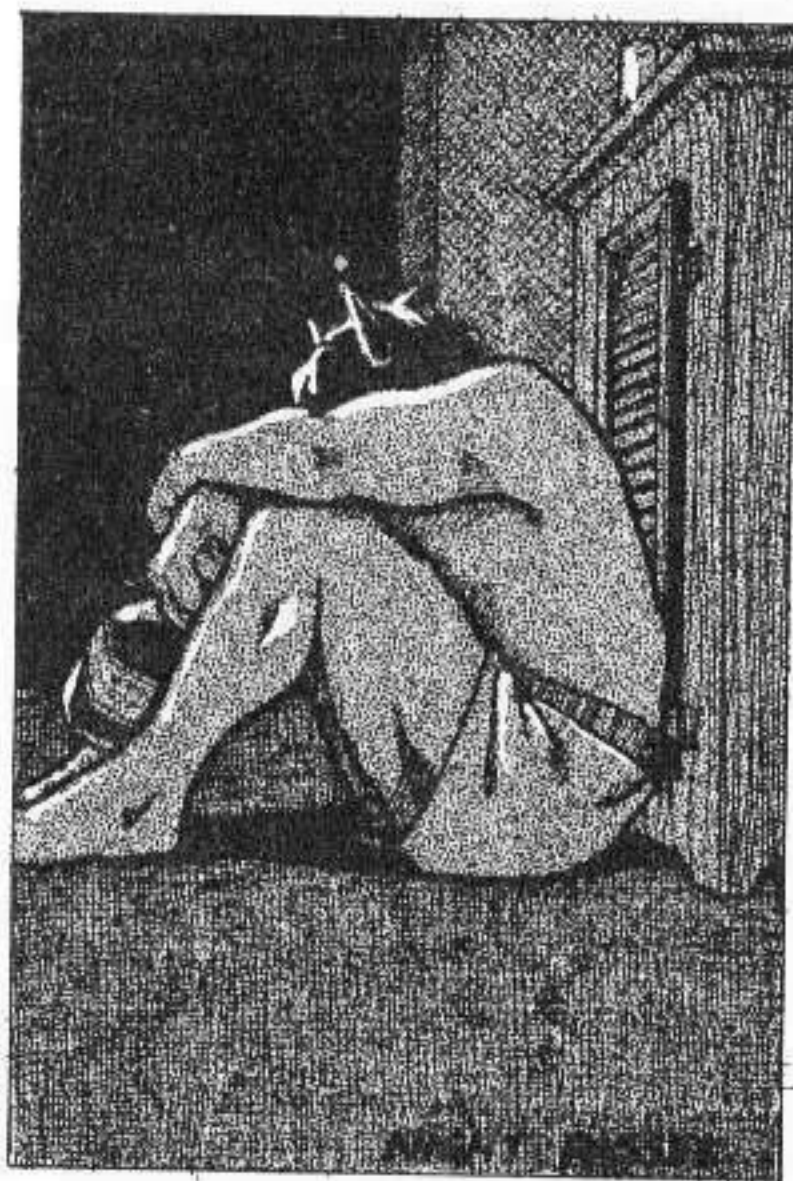
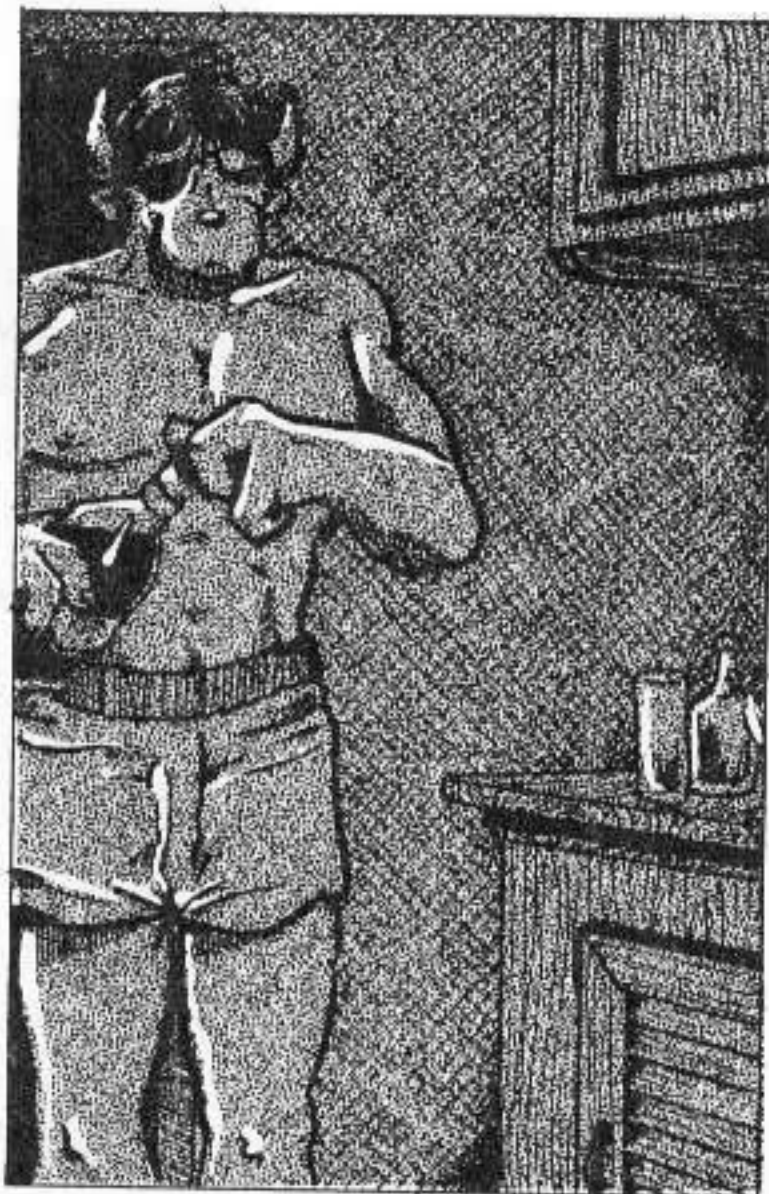
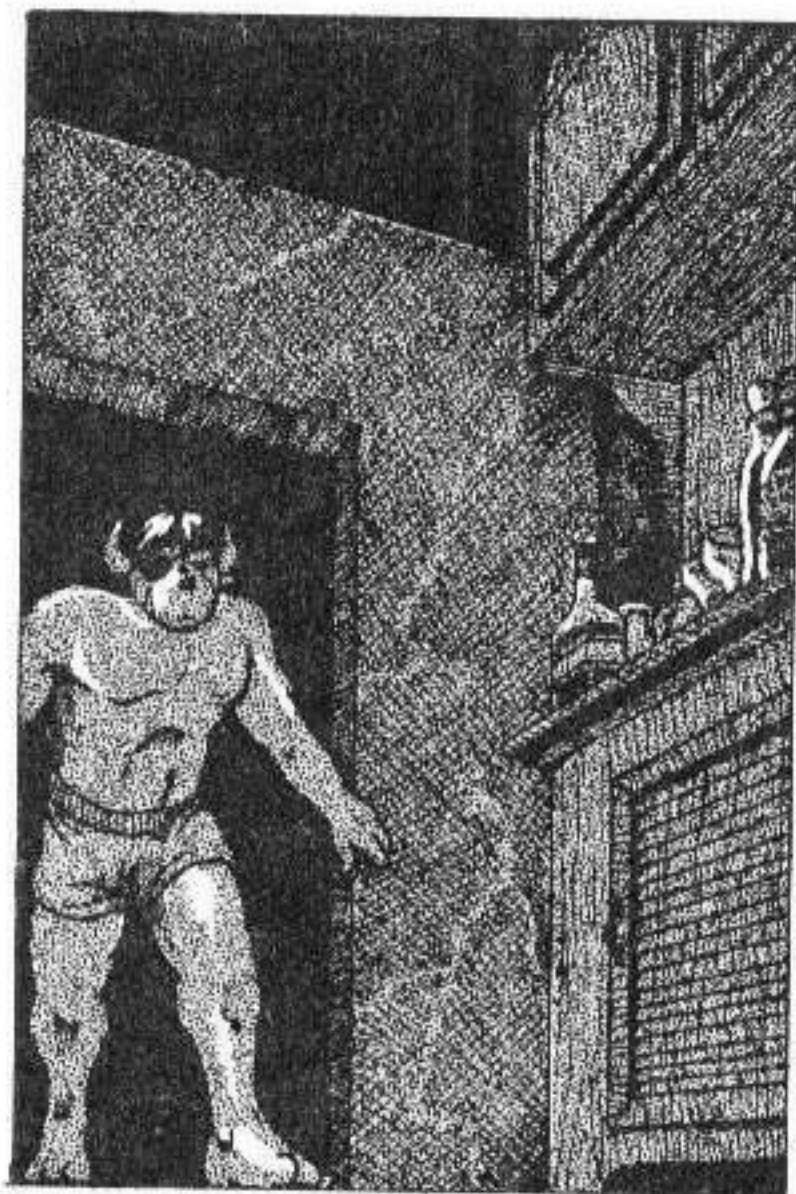


AAAA



SHUNK!
SHUNK
LINK





TO BE CONTINUED...

MORPHS

EDITORIAL #3

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Jim Groat

Being an editor has its ups and downs, as I have so discovered.

Surprisingly there have been few submissions to **Morphs** and the majority just don't really meet my standards. Don't let this frighten you into not submitting, please do. The types of stories I've recieved varied from giant Jap junk robots (which I'll reject... period) to overly sexually explicit stories. A lot of you had good stuff, but small details needed improvements. I personally review all works submitted and make comments to help out art or story wise. Also there has been a "flap" that I only take my friends in **Morphs**. The reason is simple, I had to for **Morphs** 1 & 2, or else it wouldn't have been much of a comic. This issue debuts a readers submission. Darin Davis submitted and I accepted. I suggested a few points and he worked out the details. When I start getting other submissions, those too will see print. So get on the stick and submit!

Donna Barr's "Bosom Enemies" debuts this issue also. Donna's story is slated to run 5-6 issues. Donna is best known for her half-horses in **The Dreamery** and **Centaur Gatherum Newsletter**. Under normal conditions I wouldn't allow mostly humans stories in **Morphs**, but since she has the Tudans involved I said okay (also since she had Stinz Lowhard threaten to park a Panzer on my 57 VW Bug).

#4 will conclude the stores by Phil Morrissey and Tom Owens and John Speidel will return with another Kitty Malone story. And of course Darin and Donna will be back too.

Til next time,
Jim Groat



DONNA BARR

I lay claim to two things in this life. One of them is my degree in German, that has done wonders in helping me untangle my own language. The other is an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army. It's honorable because my C.O. told me that if she caught me singing 'Lili Marlene' under the streetlamp in front of the barracks again in costume, she was going to have to get serious. I'm easy. I do as I'm told.

Not much can be said about me beyond that (I don't drink, smoke, discuss politics, and I have a very domestic homelife) except that I have two driving interests in life. One of them is art. I don't draw because I want to; I draw because I HAVE to. That, and my other interest, have gotten me slapped, reprimanded, arrested and threatened with death. This has done no good at all; I have one of the hardest heads in the civilized world.

I am an absolute hack, and suspiciously independent. I will not ink your pencils. My characters have finally stopped going on strike, but they refuse to disband their union. I have thought about bombing their headquarters, but I am afraid of what will blow up.

I AM peaceful, gawdamit.



DARIN DAVIS

Somewhere in the black mining hills of Arizona ther lives a young boy named Darin Davis.

That's me.

So, this is what it's like to be in a comic book, huh? Really isn't that much different from the real world. Scary, isn't it? Well, get your cup of Inter-national Coffee ready, it's time to share a special moment together. This is my (and consequently, Botswana Bison's) first appearance in an honest-to-goodness, genuine comic book. It's a very exciting time in my life and I'm glad you could be here to experience it with me (what a sap).

Now then let's learn a little something about the man behind the Bison: I like pretending I know how to play the harmonica, I get around by driving a little black Toyota Celica that looks like a dragon and runs like a slug, and I presently live in an apartment with a couple of roommates--Teague (my friend) and a phone answering machine (my best friend). I also like to draw (now there's a surprise).

I would also like to give special attention to Eric Wagner who basically sparked the whole idea of Botswana Bison and put most of the plot down into words. Thank you so much, Eric, and, hey... you...you got a problem!

MORPHS

P.O. BOX 32292
TUCSON, AZ. 85751

DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE TALENT?

We are soliciting submissions by any budding "funny-animal" cartoonists out there for possible publication in MORPHS.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE

DO NOT SEND YOUR ORIGINALS TO US!!

Send good xerox copies with an S.A.S.E. and your full address and phone number on a separate sheet of paper. Those submissions sent without an S.A.S.E. will be trashed.

Who knows, your feature might be the new "Ninja Turtles".

Send submissions to:
MORPHS SUBMISSIONS
P.O. BOX 32292
TUCSON, AZ 85751

Also we're starting subscriptions for both **Equine** and **Morphs**. Cost is \$8.00 for 4 issues, \$16.00 for both books. Back issues are still available, \$5.00 for **Equine** #2, \$3.00 for **Equine** #3, \$2.00 for #4. We have very few copies of #2 left. **Morphs** #1-\$4.00, **Morphs** #2-\$2.00. Include \$.50 each for postage.

Here's a list of suggested reading. If you haven't seen 'em, give 'em a try. Tell them **EQUINE** sent you. "**ALBEDO**" by Steve Gallacci, P.O. Box 19419, Queen Anne Station, Seattle, WA 98109. "**MORPHS**", P.O. Box 32292, Tucson, AZ 85751. "**SAMURAI PENGUIN**" by Dan Vado and Mark Buck, 983 South Bascom Ave., San Jose, CA 95128. "**HAMSTER VICE**" by Dwayne Ferguson and "**NERVOUS REX**" by William Van Horn, c/o Blackthorne Publishing, 786 Blackthorne Ave., El Cajon, CA 92020. "**SPACE ARK**" by Ken Michrone, P.O. Box 787, Bethel, CT 06801. "**TALES FROM THE ANIVERSE**" by Randy Zimmerman, 1269 Russell Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48198. From Fantagraphic Books; "**CRITTERS**", "**USAGI YOJIMBO**" by Stan Sakai, "**CAPTAIN JACK**" by Mike Kazaleh, c/o Fantagraphic Books, 4359 Cornell Rd., Agoura, CA 91301.

And, of course, the masters (please bow and recite after me...) "**TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES**" by Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird, P.O. Box 417, Haydenville, MA 01039. "**CEREBUS**" by Dave Sim, P.O. Box 1674 Stn C Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2.

Dear Editor;

Having had a few days to enjoy my second issue of **Morphs**, I would like to take a few moments to pass along my opinion and say a little bit about each strip.

"Blackmane the Pirate": This is really very cute (in spite of the fact that I HATE cute). I like it a lot. Ken and Beth Michrone have a very tight plot and entertaining story for a mere six pages. Let's see more by these two in future issues!

"Kitty Malone": It's still not my favorite, but this is once again a very entertaining strip. It's got action, it's got intrigue, it's got every cheap shot that the author could fit in such a short strip (my favorite for this issue is "you nearly nicked my endowments!"). Over all, a very enjoyable little romp. I once again eagerly await the next installment of the perils of Kitty!

"J.L. Coon": Once again, a good strip, with very powerful effects. Almost born at the uptown, "I said it's time...you JERK!", the flashbacks between then and now. Overall exactly what I was hoping for. Let's see more J.L. Coon!

"Star Slither": Um, Space Slug, Oops! I mean Star Lizard. "You can't hurt me! I'm the hero??!!?? This strip (and I use the term loosely) is actually getting **WORSE!** I didn't think that was possible. My word, this guy can't even draw the spaceship the same way twice. It changes shape in every single frame. Oh yes, did I mention the incredible detail in the first and second frame of the second page. I am overwhelmed. I never expected to see any comic book with the daring to publish a comic strip that belongs on the wall of a second grade classroom.

"Punk Mutants": I love this! My my, at least one death on every page. Thanks Phil, I knew you had it in you. Gnatzis! "Pam and Timmy!" (nice shot, that). The subtle joke with the Colonel's hand. The vehicle in the background on page two...This promises to be the one strip with more violence and more cheap shots than anything else in the rag. **MORE! MORE!**

DAVID PIATT
Galena, MO

People have asked me why I put Owen's work in **Morphs**. I've seen Tom's work, his pencils are incredible and his style clean. True, his inks suck, he knows this. In part four of **Star Lizard** Tom got an inker. It looks a helluva lot better. I only wish he had done this sooner. At cons I am told that Tom's work is a 50/50 split of love/hate. If everyone didn't like it I wouldn't have run it.

Dear Funny Animal People (what?),

It's a copy of **Morphs** #2! What? Well, I guess I'll just have to read it and find out what it's all about!

(One read later.) Gee, it looks like it's about funny animals...(Who said that the Maple didn't have a firm grasp of the obvious?!...)

Definitely the best story in the issue was part one of "Pleasure Palace", starring J.L. Coon. Tom Linehan created a very effective story. Through Coon's reminiscences about his past, we form a quick identification with the lead character. Also, his nostalgic feelings for the theatre form a stark contrast with its rather (!) seedy current situation, thus emphasizing the corruptness and desolation of his assignment. I look forward to future installments.

"Punk Mutants On Controlled Substances Vs. Dalmation Alley" is a *great* title--heck, it's almost the plot outline! The action itself was a little bit busy and overloaded for my tastes, but the sheer energy carried it a long way, holding out promise for future episodes.

If not quite as well realized, the other features all had their particular charms. A nice anthology, with a diversion of funny animal concepts.

T.M. Maple

Dear Publisher,

Is that how to start this? Or perhaps "dear Jim", but I don't know you so perhaps I shouldn't be so familiar. How about "Hey Mr. Groat!"

I've been a fan of equines (well, I like them too, but I meant your book) since before I ever laid eyes on a copy. Now I own both issues and I want more. I liked the back cover of #2 by Jerry Collins.

I also picked up the first issue of **Morphs** and I have to say it shows promise. I had more fun from this book than I've had from the last five issues of **Critters** combined.

Tom Linehan's J.L. Coon story was good, I'm glad you published this. I don't think most comic publishers would have the nerve to put out something this strong. I'm impressed.

Phil Morrissey's "Punk Mutants", hmm. The art and the story are okay (why does Bucky have three mouths?) but I wish that the names of the main characters weren't so...how shall I put this, unsubtle. That's it.

Tom Owens's "Star Lizard" I'll wait'n see s'more of before I deliver judgement.

"Kitty Malone" by John Speidel is...Kitty is obnoxious. If only she wasn't in such awful, exaggerated poses all the time! UGH! (shudder) Other than that the art and story are fine.

And then there's Jerry Collins (sort of) story. I'll tell you the truth, I wouldn't have bought your book if I hadn't recognized the bamboid on the front cover. I'll buy anything with Jerry Collins work! So publish more, please. But, on this one the art, especially the larger panels, could have stood to be a little cleaner and less cluttered. I know he's capable of better. All in all, it was adequate.

Ken Rosser
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Jim,

Another fantastic issue of **Morphs**! On time even! You really have something here.

On the individual stories: "Blackmane the Pirate" was pretty good. It showed me another facet of Beth Mitchrone's writing talents and Ken's artwork. I'd like to see more of them sometime---when they aren't too busy of course.

"Kitty Malone". Hmmm. No offense to Mr. Speidel intended, but the artwork is a tad too cramped for my taste. This is a pity because I really think his style is great! Maybe next time he should just do a few pages of pin-ups.

"J.L. Coon" By far this was my favorite story in the whole issue. Tom Linehan has good storytelling abilities and characters most people can relate to. The tandem past/future sequence was a bit rough, but otherwise I'd say it's perfect.

"Star Lizard" was funny, as always. The slapstick delivery and ultra-clean art was a joy to read. I just wish they had longer stories.

"Punk Mutants" Another pretty good story. Although it made less sense than the first part, it still was readable. The art seems to have improved slightly too. Again, there is a problem with art crowding here, but, at least it wasn't so bad I couldn't figure out what was happening. I hope Phil sticks with this and turns it into a quality story. He's got lots of potential.

That's about it with the comments. Hey, why not go bi-monthly and bring in some new talent? Seeing by your editorial, the latter is taken care of. As for **Critters**, I like it, but they can still learn a thing or two from you, Jim.

Morphs is a great idea, and an even greater comic, and one day I hope to see my work in there. Until then, I'll keep writing and you keep publishing, deal? Great!

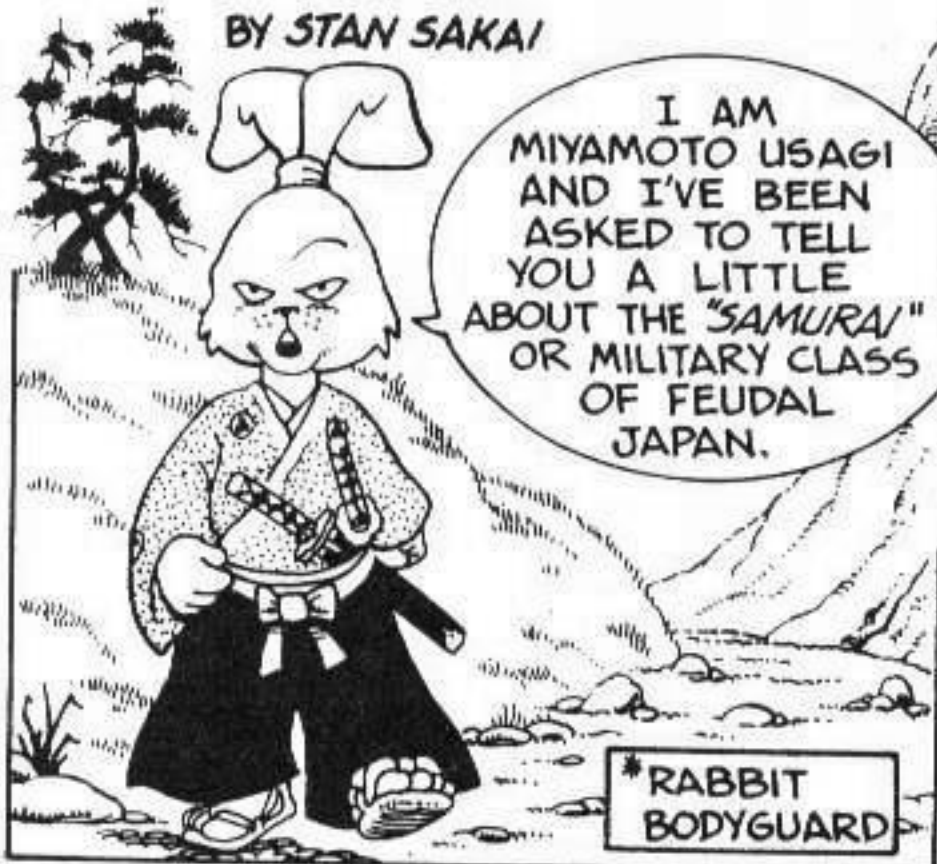
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BY STAN SAKAI



"SAMURAI" LITERALLY MEANS "ONE WHO SERVES" AND HE IS ABSOLUTELY LOYAL TO HIS LORD. A MASTERLESS SAMURAI WAS CALLED A "RONIN" (WAVE MAN) BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN SET ADrift IN THE SEA OF LIFE.



THE SWORD WAS THE SOUL OF THE SAMURAI AND HIS MOST PRIZED POSSESSION. EVEN IN TIMES OF PEACE, HE NEVER APPEARED IN PUBLIC WITHOUT THEM. THE STANDARD FIGHTING SWORD IS CALLED THE "KATANA" AND THE SHORTER SWORD IS A "WAKIZASHI".



THE SAMURAI FOLLOWS "BUSHIDO" (THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR), A CODE OF CONDUCT MUCH LIKE THE CODE OF CHIVALRY OF EUROPE'S MIDDLE AGES!



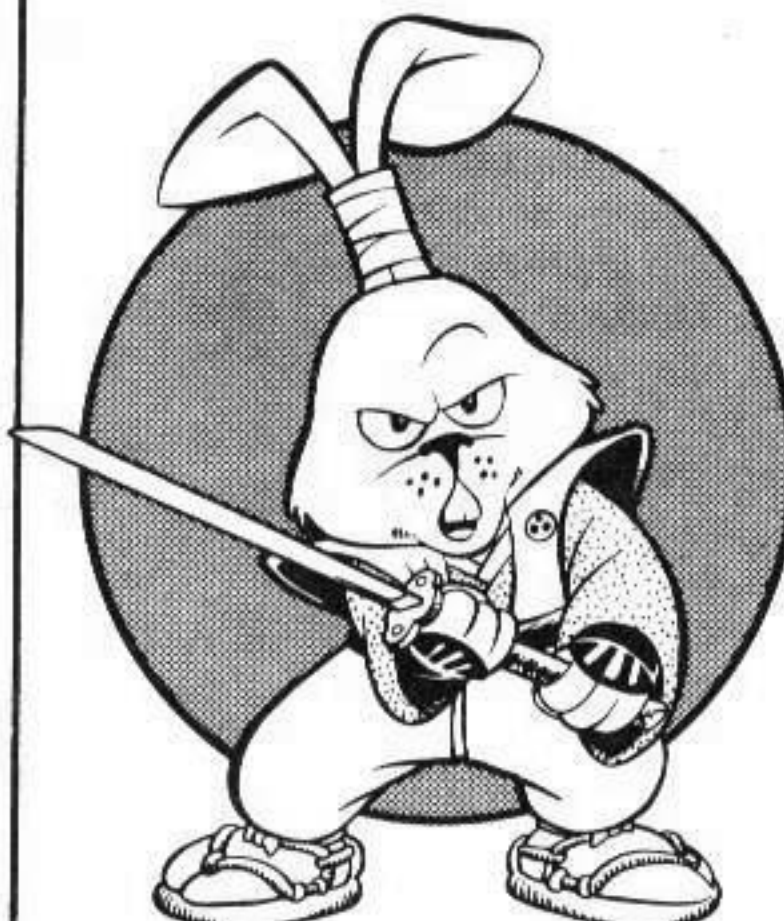
POLITENESS IS ALSO A VIRTUE IN BUSHIDO. WHEN TWO WARRIORS MEET, ETIQUETTE DICTATES THAT THEY GREET ONE ANOTHER AS I'LL DEMONSTRATE WITH THIS FOREIGN BARBARIAN.



HMMM... I WONDER IF THAT WAS A GREETING WHERE HE COMES FROM!



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